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EDITORIAL

Newport, Rhode Island, USA - The Editorial Staff

With the approach of the fall and winter computing seasons and most of us back from our holiday/vacations we leave behind us what proved to be a very active QL summer. If only a third of the rumored NEW software and hardware actually sees the light of day, the months ahead could be one of the most prolific periods in QL history.

By now, most of you have noticed the three holes punched in the margins of our last two issues, and some may even know the reason. It's time to let the secret out of the bag. We've NEVER liked binding IQLR with staples, we looked at all types of alternatives but none seemed to answer the question; "How do I store my issues so that they are readily available for reference ??". We believe we've solved the problem. With the participation of MIRACLE SYSTEMS LTD, IQLR will be shipping what we think are very handsome three ring binders to ALL our subscribers. It's going to take a bit of time, due to the amount of work required, please be patient, we'll try to get them to you as quickly as possible.

At this point we'd like to address a subject you see very little press about, that of Clubs/User Groups. One of the strengths of the QL has been its Clubs and User Groups and the tremendous support and service they have, and are offering their members. From software libraries, to help with repairs, to helping you solve that problem you thought you were the only one to encounter, to publishing newsletters, and providing good wholesome fellowship with people who share your interests.

One group, QUANTA by name, and the largest international group, has re-published Jan Jone's book on SuperBasic, gave new life to GST's Macro Assembler, manufactured the QIMI and MIDI interfaces after they had disappeared from the market place, and these being but a few of their accomplishments.

There may not be a group in your area, or maybe you can't get to meetings, or in some cases there isn't a club or group in the country you live in, or English is not your first language. You can still join a club/group and get the support/help you need, the following Clubs/User Groups publish newsletters or magazines in their native language. Why not join one !!

QL AUSTRALIA
contact: Vadim Kuchin
P.O. Box 729
Parramatta, NSW 2124
AUSTRALIA

CLUB SINCLAIR BruQsl
contact: Jaques Tasset
Aarlenstratt 104
1040 Brussels
BELGIUM

QL CONTACT FRANCE
contact: Jean-Louis Dianoux
22 Avenue Lenine
93230 Romainville
FRANCE

SINCLAIR QL USER CLUB eV.
contact: Franz Herrmann
Talstrasse 21
53546 Ockenfels
GERMANY

QL ATHENS CLUB
contact: Stathis Grigoriadis
Tarsu 6-8
10440 Athens
GREECE

Sin_QL_Air
contact: Bob Visser
Snelrewaard 6
2904 SN Capelle
a/d Ijssel, HOLLAND

QITALY CLUB
contact: Roberto Orlandi
Via Brescia 26
25039 Travgliato (BRESCIA)
ITALY

NASA
contact: Pal Monstad
Nerheim
N-5580 Olen
NORWAY

EDITORIAL- (CONT'D)

SCOTTISH QL USER GROUP
contact: Alan Pemberton
65 Lingerwood Road
Newtongrange, Midlothian
SCOTLAND EH22 4QQ

QLIPPER
contact: Marcos Cruz
Acacias 44 (Monteclaro)
ES-28223 Pozuelo de Alarcon
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SVENSKA QL GRUPPEN
contact: Johan Boman
Lilla Cedergatan 5
S-421 74 Vastra Frolunda
SWEDEN

QL CLUB
contact: Prof. Bulent Artuz
Sitesi B/1 D/5, Etiler
80600 Istanbul
TURKEY

QUANTA
contact: Bill Newell
213 Manor Rd.
Benfleet, Essex
U. K. SS7 4JD

The QITALY CLUB and QLIPPER both publish slick disk based magazines, while the SINCLAIR QL USER CLUB e.V. of Germany sponsors the IFE LIBRARY (International Freeware Exchange, sort of a Club/User Group for Clubs and User Groups).

Unlike most European countries, North Americans do not have a 'NATIONAL USER GROUP' (it must be due to our independent spirit). The following Sinclair groups support the QL with NESQLUG being a pure QL group.

TORONTO T/S USER GROUP
contact: Hugh Howie
586 Oneida Drive
Burlington, Ontario
CANADA L7T 3V3

NESQLUG
contact: Will Horton
234 Mauran Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914
USA

LIST
contact: Bob Gilder
69 Jefferson Place
Massapequa, NY 11758
USA

CATS
contact: Manny Quintero
4375 Greenberry Lane
Annandale, VA 22003
USA

ISTUG
contact: Frank Davis
513 East Main Street
Peru, IN 46970
USA

Any time a list of this nature is compiled, some club or group is inadvertently left off, if your group is missing, please forward the information to IQLR and we'll see that it gets into our next issue.

Join a CLUB or USER GROUP - SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOU.

FOR SALE !! FOR SALE !!

1 Magnavox RGB80 monitor with swivel base, QL cable included (excellent condition).

1 JFCT HARDDISK INTERFACE with MFM controller and 42 Meg Harddrive (new).

1 Custom boxed QL (Oak cabinet) with Adam power supply (powers the QL, two 3.5" disk drives and a small whisper fan). Does not include the disk drives.

Contact Bob at IQLR for details on any of the above: (401-849-3805)



The Town Crier announces

UPCOMING EVENTS

4 SEPTEMBER 1993 (SATURDAY)

QL NORTHWEST SHOW - The Georgian House Hotel
Manchester Road, Blackrod
Bolton, UK

19 SEPTEMBER 1993 (SUNDAY)

QUANTA WORKSHOP - The Village Hall, Gore Road, Rayne
Braintree, Essex, UK

26 SEPTEMBER 1993 (SUNDAY)

ITALIAN MEETING - Reggio Emilia, ITALY

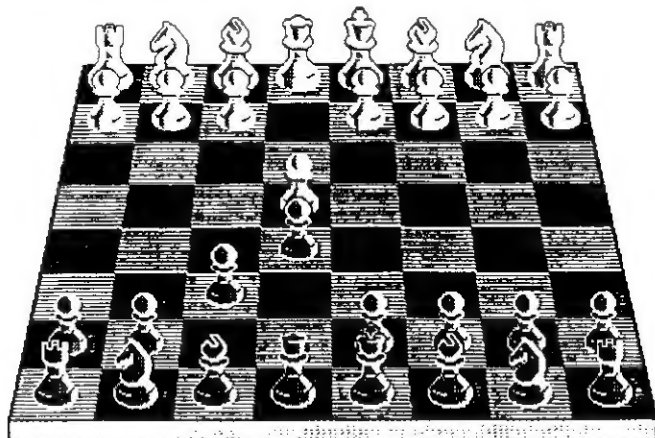
17 OCTOBER 1993 (SUNDAY)

QUANTA WORKSHOP - Walton Park Hotel
Wellington Terrace, Clevedon
Bristol, UK



Psion Chess - Version 2.02Q

Troy, Michigan, USA - Don Waltermann



I have just rediscovered an old friend of mine, Psion Chess, thanks to Gunther Strube. Gunther has kindly made a new version of Psion Chess available to owners of the program. I just received my copy and am very pleased with it. Improvements include: no copy protection, no need for microdrives (this is great for those of us using expanded QLs in mini-tower cases) and the capability to save /load games from any device. Psion Chess is supplied as one .exe file. No need for boot files, resp'd

code or resets to quit. The program now properly stops and returns control to SuperBasic.

This version of Psion Chess will run on a system using the pointer environment. I had to open a guardian window for it on my Gold Card system but that was the only care needed to run it. I got hooked on the program all over again. Psion Chess can beat me easily but I keep trying and hope to get better.

I tested Psion Chess on a Gold Card with Minerva 1.97. The price is right for this upgrade. Since Psion has not released its rights to this program, you need to send your original Psion microdrive cartridge along with a formatted disk and IRCs for return postage to :

Gunther Strube
1. Kongevej 37, 2nd
DK-1610 København V
Denmark

COMMANDS		mode-nou	stop	
Best-so-far		Analysis	Wait	
DISPLAY	press F2	Press first letter		NEW-GAME press \$

PLAYER	PROGRAM
00-00-51	00-09-01
1 .02-04	. . 07-05
2 .02-03	. .

THINKING
LEVEL Infinite ANALYSIS ON PRINTER OFF
-00-0 05-F6 01-F3 08-06 01-F4 05-F5 02-E3 07-H6 F1-D3

I would be happy to provide copies to U.S./Canadian owners of Psion Chess. I can be contacted through IQLR.

QUANTA LIBRARY UPDATE

Newport, Rhode Island, USA - Bob Dyl

We have recently received the latest additions to the Quanta Library. The first four disks are in a compressed form. It's all very easy, just run the boot program on each disk and follow the menu. The 4 disks translate into 10 NEW Quanta disks plus upgrades or additions to three others.

LIBRARY UPDATE - (CONT'D)

DISK #1

DISKTIDY	UG_7
PCX	DEMO_8
QLABEL	UG_7
MC TOOLKIT	UT_2
FTC DEMO	DEMO_9
SHARP PLOTTER	PF_3
NORBACK	UG_8

DISK #2

ADVENTURE 93	GS_5
BEANO	GS_6
QPAGE	UG_8
MOLGRAPH	GRAF_3

DISK #3

QUICKMAND 3	DEMO_7
SPECULATOR	SP_10
DBAS 1	SP_7

DISK #4

DBAS 2	SP_8
--------	------

By the time you read this, we should have a second group of disks, which includes an updated LIBGUIDE.

Roy Brereton who has served with great distinction as Head Librarian for a number of years, has recently resigned due to an ever growing work load in his day to day job. Roy will however remain on the Quanta committee, and as we understand it, take over responsibility for the items Quanta offers its members (T-Shirts, Binders, software, etc).

W. Geraint Jones a frequent contributor to IQLR and a good friend, will assume the duties as Head Librarian. With Geraint at the helm, Quanta members can be assured of a continuance of the high standards set by Roy. *(Editor's Note: Please remember that the QUANTA LIBRARY is available to QUANTA members only. Why not join !)*

CORRECTIONS

In our last issue we mis-printed two telephone numbers. The first to be corrected, is SOFTWARE 87's NEW enquire line: 071 485 9008. The second is our OWN voice/fax number: 401 849 3805. Sorry about that.

DILWYN JONES COMPUTING

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GWYNEDD, LL57 3YT, GREAT BRITAIN

TELEPHONE: (0248) 354023

QL SOFTWARE

A SELECTION FROM OUR RANGE OF NEARLY 100 PRODUCTS FOR THE QL
NOT ENOUGH ROOM TO GIVE MUCH INFORMATION HERE HERE, SO PLEASE
ASK FOR OUR CATALOGUE (PHONE OR WRITE FOR A COPY).

EASYPTR III part £40.50
Simplified pointer environment programming. Part 1 consists of sprite editor, menu editor and superbasic extensions to use menus in your own programs. Applications created using Easypttr III can be compiled with QLiberator. Requires expanded memory, available on disk only.

EASYPTR III part 2 £20.00
Consists of appendix manager and enhanced toolkit for control of menus etc in your programs.

EASYPTR III part 3 £20.00
Consists of Easysource and C library routines, etc.

QLIBERATOR £50.00
Superb superbasic compiler, compiles virtually all of basic plus most toolkit commands, etc. Produce faster multitasking code from your basic programs. Compile resident extensions, use overlays, etc with the latest V3.36. Can be mouse controlled. Expanded memory required.

BUDGET QLIBERATOR £25.00
Excellent value, compiles virtually all of superbasic but without some of the additional facilities of the full version. Not mouse controlled. Works on unexpanded QL too.

DJTOOLKIT £10.00
Compact toolkit of BASIC extensions, ideal for use with QLiberator. Really useful programming commands, can be distributed with your compiled programs if you wish. At this price, a bargain! Suitable for unexpanded QL.

LINEDESIGN £100.00
Vector drawing package, uses outline fonts and clipart, move and resize text and graphics without loss of quality. Ideal for making posters, etc. Supplied with huge range of fonts and clipart on TEN disks! The more memory your system has, the better! Available on disk only, can be mouse controlled (including SERmouse).

DATA DESIGN 3 £60.00
Superb, fast pointer driven database with free form field structures, with the option of disk based for large files if required, or smaller files can be kept in memory for speed. You do not have to be able to program this version, but if you add the API package, it can be programmed from basic, C, or assembler. Expanded memory required, disk only.
API for Data Design £20.00

QPAC2 £39.95
Tony Tebby's superb pointer environment package. In addition to the pointer environment files themselves, this includes tutorials, extensive manual, files menu, channels and jobs menus, easy switching between jobs, hotkeys, etc. Mouse or keyboard controlled, a good introduction to pointer environment, 256k ram minimum, disk only

QPAC1 £19.95
Ideal companion to QPAC2, consists of small accessory programs such as calculator, calendar, clocks, alarm clocks, typewriter, etc. All can be mouse controlled. Pointer environment files included. Can be used with or without QPAC2. Expanded memory required, disk only.

QTYPT2 £29.95
Tony Tebby's spelling checker program. Check spelling as you type OR check existing files retrospectively. User interface allows you to write programs which use the dictionary facilities. English, French and German dictionaries included!

DISA £29.00
Interactive pointer driven machine code disassembler. 256k ram min. Disk only.

MEGATOOLKIT EPROM VERSION £25.00 £40.00
Large toolkit with over 200 BASIC extensions, suitable for use with QLiberator or Turbo. Many examples supplied, extensive manual. Suitable for unexpanded QL.

DISCOVER £20.00
The painless way to move files from QL to PC and vice versa. As simple as copying files between two disks. 256k ram min., disk only.

MULTI DISCOVER £30.00
In addition to Discover facilities, also contains CPM, Unix CP10, BBC micro and now Spectrum and SAM Coupe file transfer capability. 256k min. ram, disk only.

TEXTIDY £15.00
Assists Discover with conversion of text files by stripping out control codes, etc. 256k ram min.

CONVERT-PCX £10.00
Used with Discover, allows transfer of bit mapped PC clipart graphics in PCX format (a common PC file format) to QL screens or Page Designer pages. 256k ram, disk only.

QL-PC FILESERVER £24.50
Link a PC and a QL via a serial port cable and use this software to enable the two to communicate - the QL can save its files on a PC's disk systems and print to the PC's serial port using normal basic commands like COPY. Works on unexpanded QL.

BANTER £25.00
Simple to use banner maker which uses outline fonts for good quality large text. Prints sideways across up to 4 sheets of paper. Simple to use, menu driven, on screen preview before printing, etc. Suits most Epson compatible printers.

IMAGE PROCESSOR 2 £15.00
Easy to use graphics system, featuring usual graphics facilities, pixel zoom editing, image enhancement, mode conversion etc. 512k, disk only.

SCREEN COMPRESSION £10.00
Reduce the amount of storage required by graphics on disk or microdrive - supports several QL formats. 256k, disk only.

SCREEN DAZZLER £15.00
Unlike the usual screen savers, which simply turn off the display when the keyboard is not used for a while, this one can activate various graphical displays to provide an attractive means of preventing screen burn-in, more like the screen savers on other computers. If you have a compiler, you can even write your own savers by following the instructions in the manual. Pointer environment compatible.

SCANNED CLIPART 1 £10.00
NEW! A disk full of compressed scanned pictures (decompression program supplied of course) which can be used in most QL programs (DTP, graphics, etc). Assorted collection, containing many pictures you may not find in other collections. Large number of pictures, a bargain at this price. 128k, disk only.

PRINTERMASTER £20.00
Select printer control codes quickly and simply from a menu to set fonts, page lengths, etc before printing from programs like Quill, etc. 128k, disk/mdv

SERMOUSE £40.00
Albin Hester's serial mouse driver system for the QL is now available from DJC complete with a QL style matching black mouse with 9 pin serial connector and UK style serial port adaptor lead. Version 3 driver software. Can now work with The Pointer too. NB POSTAGE CHARGES BELOW

SIDEWRITER £15.00
Print wide spreadsheets or plain text files sideways using a choice of character sizes (down to very small characters) on a 9 pin or 24 pin dot matrix printer. Program can be pointer driven (expanded memory required) or used without pointer on unexpanded QL. We've had many requests for such a program, here it is at last! Available on disk or microdrive.

SQUIDGY ROUND THE WORLD £12.50
An arcade game, ideal for the young at heart! 128k

SUPPLIES

FLOPPY DISKS £0.40
DSHD DISKS £0.70
MICRODRIVES £2.50
DISK LABELS £2.00
On printer roll
ADDRESS LABELS £2.00
MDV LABELS £2.00
MOUSE MATS £2.50
Disk box dividers
In stock once more!

TERMS: Discounts - buy 2 programs, claim 5% off each, buy 3 or more, claim 10% off each program. Offer applies to software only. **POSTAGE** - Software is sent post free to UK addresses. Overseas please add £1.00 per program for postage (maximum £3.00). Floppy disks and serial mouse - add postage of £2.50. Labels/mouse mats - add postage of £0.50 per item if only buying these. **PAYMENT** - in UK currency (pounds sterling) only please. Payment by cheque, Eurocheque, Postal Order, cash (send by registered post), or by credit card (Visa/Access/Mastercard/Eurocard/Connect). In case of difficulty contact us first to arrange a payment method if none of these is possible for you. Please make cheques, etc payable to DILWYN JONES COMPUTING (not to any other name or abbreviation please, our bank prefers it that way!). If total order value is less than £5.00, add £1.00 to total or we'll make a loss due to high bank charges.

DILWYN JONES COMPUTING

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GWYNEDD, LL57 3YT, GREAT BRITAIN

TELEPHONE: (0248) 354023

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ASK FOR OUR CATALOGUE (PHONE OR WRITE FOR A COPY)

5-GAMES PACK £12.50
5 'thinking' games in one bargain pack. 128k

OPEN GOLF £12.50
Golf playing simulation, with choice of 50 courses each of 18 holes. Score table feature, choice of clubs used, shot strengths, wind, rough, bunkers, etc. 384k memory required, best used with a colour monitor. Disk only.

GREY WOLF £12.50
Submarine warfare simulation, where you are the commander of a submarine in the Atlantic, an exercise in strategy for entertainment purposes. 384k RAM, 85 column monitor required. Disk only.

QUICK MANDELBRÖT III £15.00
Fractal graphics, mandelbrot set, Julia set, screen dump facility, use mode 4 or mode 8 to generate screens, background calculation option, save and load screens (of course), can optionally use Binary Decomposition Method for plotting, Magnify options. Works on 128k QL, disk or microdrive.

SToQL £12.50
Atari ST screen transfer program for use with Discover. Converts Neochrome or Degas (all three resolutions in pit, pit2 or pit3 format). 256k RAM, disk only.

QUIZ MASTER II £12.50
Similar to quiz game machines found in pubs and clubs, colourful, 2 sets of questions supplied, you can make up your own for use with this program. 128k RAM, disk or microdrive.

OTHER SOFTWARE

FOR DETAILS, SEE PREVIOUS ADVERTS

QLOAD and QREF £15.00

S_EDIT £20.00

BASIC REPORTER £10.00

OPD INTERCHANGE £15.00

LOCKSMITHE £14.95

4MATTER £14.95

LOCKSMITHE & 4MATTER TOGETHER £23.50

Note: To use 4Matter, you need Locksmithe, but 4Matter available separately for users who already have Locksmithe.

MDV TOOLCHEST £14.95

FILES 2 £12.00

FILEMASTER £12.00

THE CIPHER £12.00

WINBACK 2 £25.00

BANTER £25.00

VISION MIXER 1 £10.00

VISION MIXER PLUS £22.50

PICTUREMASTER £15.00

PICTUREMASTER PLUS £20.00

THE PAINTER £25.00

THE CLIPART £12.00

QRACTAL £20.00

PD2 CLIPART £10.00

SCREEN SNATCHER £10.00

TEXT 'N' GRAPHIX £20.00

TRANS24 £10.00

SIDEWINDER PLUS £24.95

BIBLE TEXT DISKS £20.00

SPELLBOUND £30.00

SPELLBOUND SE £50.00

QUICK POSTERS £10.00

ADDRESS BOOK & LABEL PRINTER £15.00

GENEALOGIST 2ND EDITION £30.00

BUDGET 128K GENEALOGIST £12.00

FLASHBACK £25.00

FLASHBACK SE £40.00

DISK INDEXER £12.00

DBEASY £15.00

DBPROGS £15.00

NETWORK PROVER £4.00

SOLITAIRE £15.00

THE FUGITIVE £9.95

CRICKET SECRETARY £12.00

QUESTION MASTER £10.00

QM QUIZ 1 £5.00

QM QUIZ 2 £5.00

QM QUIZ 3 £5.00

COCKTAILS WAITER £10.00

FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND III £39.95

QTOP £29.95

PRINTERMASTER £20.00

HOME BUDGET £20.00

SCREEN ECONOMISER £10.00

SLOWGOLD £5.00

TASKMASTER £25.00

DISK LABELLER £10.00

THE CAT £5.00

ROB ROY PACK £10.00

MAGAZINES

We now have in stock a limited number of back issues of the QL magazines formerly published by CGH Services and we can also offer individual copies of the new QL magazine 'QReview' (as the title implies, based on reviews of QL products). Subscription details supplied with orders for any back issues. Individual copies of QReview (published by the editor of the other magazines described below, QReview to be launched end of June) available for £2.00 each (UK), £2.50 (Europe), or £3.50 (USA and rest of world). We can also offer attractive deals on complete sets of back issues of a magazine.

QL TECHNICAL REVIEW

A non-games review magazine, 9 issues available at £2.00 each (UK), £2.50 (Europe), £3.50 (USA and rest of world).

COMPLETE SET £12.00 (UK), £16.00 (Europe), £24.00 (USA etc).

QL ADVENTURER'S FORUM

Games based magazines, 9 issues in total available at £1.75 each (UK), £2.25 (Europe), £3.25 (USA etc).

QL LEISURE REVIEW

Games based magazines, 2 issues published available at £2.00 each (UK), £2.50 (Europe), £3.50 (USA etc)

COMPLETE SET OF BOTH GAMES MAGAZINES (11 ISSUES) £14.00 (UK), £20.00 (Europe), £30.00 (USA etc).

PLEASE NOTE: SMALL ORDERS.

IF TOTAL COST OF ORDER IS LESS THAN £5.00, ADD £1.00 TOWARDS COST OF SMALL ORDERS (BANK CHARGES ETC) OR WE WILL MAKE A LOSS ON SUCH ORDERS!

NOTES on XCHANGE

Massapequa, New York, USA - Bob Gilder

With the recent release of XCHANGE into the Public Domain (QL version only), and the lack of available documentation (at least in North America), it became apparent that QL users needed something in addition to their knowledge of QUILL.

The following notes on XCHANGE have been extracted from the XCHANGE HELP and QUILL HELP files in order to provide QL users with some helpful documentation. Where necessary I have edited sections of these files and have added some additional text where necessary. As far as I see, Quill has the majority of NEW commands which were added to the second set of commands and had some of its commands added to the EXCHANGE set of commands (Format and Backup).

EASEL can now produce 3-D bar graphs. See EASEL, CHANGE for details. Archive now has a RENAME command. ABACUS allows TITLES to follow along from A to Z and 1 to 40 when expanding the display beyond the normal screen limits. For both of these commands, follow the prompts in the command window at the center top of your monitor screen.

Once you decide to take the plunge into XCHANGE; my advice is:

Load XCHANGE, press CTRL-C for an active cursor, press F3 and T (tsl). Enter TUTOR when the prompt appears. After a few seconds a menu will appear prompting a response to load a Tutor file on QUILL, ARCHIVE, ABACUS or EASEL. Just press the first letter for any of these files as represented in the menu. Follow the prompts and you will be surprised at the outcome.

XCHANGE

Xchange provides an environment in which you can use the programs in the Xchange family. These programs are organised as a set of TASKS, listed at the left of the Xchange screen. Select any listed task by pressing any key (except ENTER) until the task you want is highlighted and then press ENTER. If you have selected a new task you must then type a name for the task.

XCHANGE HELP - The Help key (F1) will interrupt the operation of the program and provide a screen of information providing help related to where you help related to where you are in the program. Pressing the ESC key will take you back to the program at the same place as where you invoked the Help facility. In other words, help can be asked for at any time, without interfering with what you are doing. You can get additional information, where available, by typing the first few letters of any subject shown in the list at the bottom of the screen, and pressing ENTER.

COMMANDS - Press F3 to see a list of the available commands in the control area at the top of the screen. You can then select a command by pressing the key corresponding to the first letter of the one you want.

backup continue delete list new output quit rename set tsl

BACKUP - Use this command to make a copy of any Xchange file. Type the full name of the file you want to copy and press ENTER. Then type the full name that you want the new copy to have. To avoid losing valuable information resulting from loss of or

NOTES on XCHANGE - (CONT'D)

damage to any of your disks you should make copies to a disk in a different drive of all important files.

CONTINUE - Allows you to restart an existing task. After selecting the command, type the name of the task you want to restart, and then press ENTER.

DELETE - Erases an Xchange file. You must type the full name of the file you want to delete and then press ENTER.

LIST - Lists the names of all the files on a particular drive. Xchange prompts you with the current drive, suggesting that it lists all files on that drive. Press ENTER to accept this suggestion, or type one of the following flp1_ - for floppy disk drive 1; ram1_ - for memory files.

NEW - Allows you to start a new task. After selecting the command, type the first three letters of the type of task you want - eg type ABA for an ABACUS task and press ENTER. Then type a name for the task you want to start, and then press ENTER.

OUTPUT - Controls the printing of a document as a background task. Type the name of the file you want to print and press ENTER. Xchange assumes that the file name extension is LIS unless you include a different extension in the file name. You may then use any Xchange task while the file is being printed. If you select this command while a file is being printed, Xchange offers you the opportunity to stop the printer.

QUIT - Leaves Xchange and returns to Superbasic. As this can cause loss of data Xchange will ask if you are sure that you want to quit. If you are, press ENTER otherwise just press ESC. Any open files will be closed automatically.

RENAME - Allows you to change the name of any Xchange file. Type the full name of the existing file and press ENTER, then type the new name for the file and press ENTER.

SET - Selects the directory which Xchange will automatically use for either the Help files or the data files (the current drive). Press ENTER to select the assumed location of data files. Type the device name (eg flp1_ or ram1_) you want to be the current drive. All Xchange tasks will assume that filenames refer to this drive unless you include another drive specifier.

Alternatively, press the H key to select the directory in which all Xchange programs will look for the text of the Help messages. Then type the device name that you want Xchange to use (flp1_, ram1_) and press ENTER. * (See end of file for notes on this command)

TSL - Allows you to run an existing Task Sequencing Language (TSL) file. Type the name of the file you want to run and press ENTER. The command assumes that the file name extension is TSL unless you include a different extension in the file name. How to create TSL files is described in your Xchange manual.

XCHANGE - Controls the transfer of information between Xchange tasks. Use any key (except ENTER) to highlight the task from which you want to transfer information (the source task) and press ENTER. Then select the task to which the information is to be transferred (the destination task) and press ENTER.

NOTES on XCHANGE - (CONT'D)

The command then guides you through the sequence of exporting the information from the source task and importing it into the destination. You are left in the destination task so that you can examine the result of the transfer.

PRINTER STATUS - Xchange shows, under this heading, the name of any file that is currently being printed.

TASK - The name of a task may be up to eight characters long and must start with a letter. The rest of the name may be made up of any combination of letters and numbers. Press ENTER at the end of the name.

CURRENT DRIVE - All the Xchange programs assume that a file name refers to a file on this drive unless you specify otherwise in the file name. You can select which drive is to be the current drive with the Set command.

FILE NAME - File names used by Xchange are made up of three parts :

- 1) the drive specifier, ie flp1_ or ram1_
- 2) a name of up to eight characters, eg. MYFILE1 This name can be any combination of letters and numbers, but must start with a letter
- 3) a three-letter file name extension, separated from the name by an underscore, eg. _EXP

Xchange does not distinguish between upper and lower case, so: FLP1 MYFILE1 EXP and flp1_myfile1_exp are seen as being the same. You only need to include the drive specifier and the extension if they are not the ones that the Xchange program expects.

New QUILL Commands

GLOSSARY - Can be used to save frequently used text or command sequences for later use. To DEFINE a GLOSSARY ENTRY press F5 twice followed by the letter you want to file the sequence under ('Y' for 'Yours Sincerely' for example). Then press ENTER and type in the text or commands that you want saved in the GLOSSARY exactly as you would normally.

To END the GLOSSARY DEFINITION press F5 again. These definitions will automatically be saved when you leave QUILL by the QUIT command, pressing 'A' (NEW! A = Abandon and will only appear within the command box when defining a GLOSSARY file). There is a limit of 250 characters on each entry. To USE a GLOSSARY ENTRY press F5 and then the letter for the required entry.

SECOND COMMAND SET OF COMMANDS - Those files starting with FILE can be obtained by entering 'F' - (F3, O, F or F3, F3, F).

FILE, EXPORT - Export allows the document to be saved to a file in ASCII format. On entering the command, type the file name and ENTER. The document will be saved in the file with no header or footer, no page breaks, no margins and no typeface information. Each line is terminated by a carriage return line feed character pair. You can use QUILL to write a TSL file then use the EXPORT command to save it for use; remember to save it with extension '_tsl'.

NOTES on XCHANGE - (CONT'D)

FILE, TRANSFER - Document Transfer files allow a complete document to be moved to QUILL running on a different make of machine. Also because a transfer file is made up of only ascii text it may be sent down a 7 bit communications link; e.g. a PAD to the PSS. Document transfer files have a default extension of _qlt. Press S to save a transfer file or L to load one, then enter the required filename.

FILE, MAIL - MAIL allows strings of text (eg names and addresses) to be added into a piece of text (eg a standard letter). This is an advanced feature, and you should refer to the manual for a complete explanation. To use MAIL from the keyboard press ENTER after starting the command. The merged document can be sent straight to the printer or to a file as in the PRINT command.

To use MAIL from a QUILL file, type in the file name and extension and press ENTER. To use a file generated by ARCHIVE just type its name and press ENTER.

MAIL FORMATS - The simplest way to use MAIL is with ARCHIVE. Refer to your manual for details. To generate a secondary file in QUILL (the file that QUILL will look in for text to be inserted into the standard text) use a paragraph to contain the 'field' names, followed by paragraphs for each set of text strings you want to merge. Use '*' to separate the field names and subsequent text data. An example:

```
*title*name*address1*address2*address3*
*Mr*Smith*21, The Lees,*Dodgeford,*London.*
... and so on.
```

The first line contains the field names, subsequent paragraphs contain the text which will replace the field names. Prepare the primary file with the field names surrounded by '*'s. For example:

```
Dear *title* *name*,
With reference to *address1* we would ...
```

You may not, in this case, use '*' except at both ends of a field name. However, if the first character of the primary file is neither alphabetic nor numeric nor '*', '+' for example, it is taken as a substitute for '*'. This allows you to use '*' in the text.

'**' is taken as a keyboard input point for personalizing each document.

MAIL FROM THE KEYBOARD - This allows each field to be replaced from the keyboard instead of from a file. The field name appears near the bottom of the screen on the command line. You may then type in the replacement text. You can use the cursor keys and typeface option. Press ESC to go to the next field.

When all the fields are complete you will be asked if you want to output the result. Press Y or N. Then QUILL will ask if you want to do another merge. When you stop, the document last merged is your current one.

EXTRACT (on the alternative command list) - Allows selected text to be saved to either a general buffer or to a named file. As in COPY, move the cursor to the start of the text to be extracted. Press ENTER. Move the cursor to the end the text, and, when the right text is highlighted, press ENTER. Press ENTER to delete the highlighted text

NOTES on XCHANGE - (CONT'D)

or K to keep it. Then press ENTER to save the text to buffer.doc (see the MERGE command) or type in a file name. If the file already exists you can press ENTER to overwrite the file or A to append to the end of it.

EASEL

CHANGE - This is a very powerful command, allowing you to change the way data is displayed as a graph. E.g. to change the format of a bar graph to 3-D, press 'f' for format number and then 'Shift-?', ENTER. Eight different styles of graphs are displayed. Press 3 for a 3-D bar graph.

CHOICE - When you have to make a choice of bars, lines, graph papers or axes, e.g. when you accept a ? default in the Change command, a screen showing the options currently available to you appears. Along the top row are the defaults offered by the computer. Along the bottom row are objects that you may have designed.

Make your choice by moving the cursor with the left and right arrow keys and then press ENTER. You can delete an object on the bottom row to make room for more by pressing F4. If none of the available ones is to your taste, choose the one with the '?'; this will lead you to design a new one.

*** Note on the SET command** - The change made to the default drive and or help file drive is a temporary change only! The book "QUILL USER'S REFERENCE MANUAL, author Stephen Morris, published by GLENTOP Business Computing, Herts UK, states that when you access the SET command, entering 'P' before selecting either the default drive or help file drive will provide a permanent change. This does not work on the QL version of XCHANGE.

Perhaps, some of our programming hackers out there would like to add a patch to the SET command if it is possible.

I have all of the XCHANGE HELP files re-formatted on separate Quill doc files. I find it much easier to read them when they are printed out. If you have EDITOR SE, all you have to do is load them into EDITOR with the RU command. Set the cursor at the top of the file and enter the following command sequence to format them:

RP E/CTRL-SHIFT-Vertical bar character// S

NOTE: The CTRL-SHIFT Vertical bar will print on the screen as a down arrow with a bar on top of it.

After the file has been formatted, delete the control codes at the top of the files and two lines of repeated '='s at the bottom of the files. Some words may be broken - just delete the spaces from the next line and they will be whole again. There may be some additional control characters scattered about - just delete them

I can provide the XCHANGE set of formatted HELP files to any one interested. Send, a formatted disk and return postage, please.

Bob Gilder 69 Jefferson Place Massapequa, NY 11758 USA

Everybody needs a database, and we supply the best database currently available for the Sinclair QL and compatibles.

You can even program it in the language you are already familiar with: SuperBasic or C. The hackers can even use Assembly Language.

The main program is ideal for simple applications, like keeping addresses, your CD-playlist, the technical data of your favourite cars...

If you already use a database on the QL, the files from Archive and Flashback can be converted in a flash.

But even relational databases, or form-editing are possible. Just use the API, which gives access to the powerful part of the DDE, the rest you can mould to your own requirements. Thanks to the API you can use a reliable system, based on the DDE (so use disk-based files, let your programs multi-task and work on the same file) and create your own user interface, which will be just perfect for YOU!

The DATAdesign Engine (DDE), which is at the heart of this system, allows disk-based (security) as well as memory-based (speed) files. Multiple users (or programs) can work on the same file simultaneously. The DDE works extremely fast, even when disk-based, thanks to the use of indexes, and because the program is fully machine-coded.

DATAdesign main program	3000 BEF (approx 100 USD or 60 GBP)
DATAdesign API	1000 BEF (approx 33 USD or 20 GBP)
LINEdesign	5000 BEF (approx 166 USD or 100 GBP)

All our programs are also available from Jochen Merz, Software87, Dilwyn Jones Computing and Mechanical Affinities.

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I. Overview

The Sidewriter documentation makes modest sounding claims: Sidewriter prints spreadsheet files (exported from Abacus to Quill) or plain text files in landscape print (sideways). Sidewriter offers options on fonts, output destination, 9 or 24 pin printer, print intensity via number of printing passes, paper width, file line width (sideways down the page), columns per inch horizontally, and linespacing (viz., inter-character spacing) for 9 and 24 pin printers.

This sounds simple enough to use and to review. However, just as important as the printing features of Sidewriter are the control features. A windowing (pointer/ windows/ menus) environment is supplied, but "traditional" keyboard (non-pointer) control has been retained. A Hotkey system is included as well. Multitasking appears to work as claimed (I was only partially able to test this).

The pointer environment as tested was controlled by the arrow keys. Sidewriter also provides for mouse control of the pointer/windows/menus environment. While a mouse did arrive in the area (no joke particularly intended) about the time this review was due, that approach could not be tested.

The printing options can have defaults set for Sidewriter's startup by using the Config program supplied. Any of the options can also be varied from the defaults from within Sidewriter before printing starts. A menu or prompt will usually supply a suggested value, which, however, can readily be altered. Note that Sidewriter (currently) requires a printer which supports Epson compatible bit image graphics.

The disk also came with a Demo version of Sidewriter which can be freely given away, unlike the fully working, copyrighted version.

I tested Sidewriter on two hardware configurations (see NOTES) which I'll refer to as HW1 and HW2. (I did not seriously test RES_128 or unplug my Trump Card).

II. Features--Briefly

Printing parameters that the user can vary are summarized above.

Config, mentioned above, is yet another program supplied on the disk; its opening message is "This program, supplied by Qjump, can be used to configure any software system which uses the standard format of configuration information up to level 1." Another interesting idea to see on the QL.

Windowing and the Hotkey System for the QL were a pleasure to become acquainted with. Much of the world is going or has gone that way—including my workplace.

III. Test Results

There are many variables in the picture, even at a higher level—printing parameters, control features, Hotkeys, etc. I could not test every combination and implication, but covered printing and control features on varied inputs reasonably.

SIDEWRITER - (CONT'D)

Fonts and related printing features

I did use all fonts; there are eight "standard" fonts and seven "wide" fonts supplied. For most print runs I used settings close to Sidewriter's originals. Unusual features such as condensed print and multi-pass (2- or 3-pass) printed quite well down the page.

The Square font with one pass has a clean look; likewise Serif-Wide. Some of the wide fonts came out fuzzy on the NX-1000; I'd like to see some on a 24-pin printer with two or three passes.

G. Jones (the author of Sidewriter) expresses the underlying assumption that sideways spreadsheet printing is not a job wherein high quality text printing is paramount; thus, these are draft fonts. Still, a 3-pass Square font run (if you wish to wait it out) can come out pleasing to the eye.

Control Features--Windowing Environment

Using the arrow keys, the pointer moves smoothly, not in jumps. Pointer movement quickly highlights a given menu item with an outline box; SPACE/"HIT" whites in the box. These visual effects work equally well on the monochrome or color monitor. Invoking a given menu selection via ENTER/"DO" quickly brings action—either another selection menu (overlaid if appropriate) or the Main Menu with a parameter newly set.

When you're in the midst of many devices and potential files, the windowing environment is truly helpful. The file select window, in particular, is indeed "powerful" as G. Jones says. You can select from many font files and, of course, your own text and (exported) spreadsheet files with few keystrokes.

All the above is true even on HW1.

Control--By Keyboard

For a simple application wherein you know you just want one or a few file(s), keyboard control is quite handy, and, is selectable in the first screen or via KEYBOARD BOOT. The keyboard controlled approach did not pull up all the defaults (e.g. font), although that could come in a future release.

Control Features--Hotkey System

I made a version of Sidewriter's original BOOT, following the modest amount of Hotkey documentation supplied, to see how successfully I could HOT_LOAD and HOT_PICK Sidewriter and the four Psion programs. E.g.,

```
nnn REMark EXEC FLPx SIDEWRITER_OBJ
nnn ERT HOT_LOAD("s","FLPx SIDEWRITER_OBJ")
nnn ERT HOT_PICK("S","SIDEWRITER")
nnn ERT HOT_LOAD("w","FLPy QLWP")
nnn ERT HOT_PICK("W","QLWP")
nnn ERT HOT_LOAD("b","FLPy QLWG")
```

and so on.

SIDEWRITER - (CONT'D)

On HW2 I HOT LOADED Sidewriter, Quill and Abacus. As the Sidewriter documentation says, I was able to Control-C amongst jobs, with the screen for each coming up appropriately.

I was always able to HOT PICK Sidewriter (at least before "OK"-ing a Print) or Quill, but not Abacus--whereby hangs a tale. In response to Toolkit II's JOBS, Quill showed the name "QLWP" after job, tag, owner, and priority, whereas Abacus/QLSS--at least the version I have--had the name blank. HOT PICK, as is pointed out, is looking for a name. Screens of course changed as each program came up.

So, I have many pages of command sequences recorded in detail, including for HW1. However, I don't presently know their full import.

I only tried Business Graphics/QLBG and Database/QLDB on HW1, where I did get all five programs HOT LOADED. QLBG (my version on-hand) did not show a name either in response to JOBS.

(Editor's Note: the Psion software that accompanied North American QLs arrived with different names; Archive became QL DataBase, Abacus became QL SpreadSheet, Easel became QL Business Graphics, and Quill bore the name QL WordProcessor. I've never been able to find out why Sinclair changed the names for the North American market.)

It appears, once Sidewriter has started printing, that Ctrl-C and the attempted Hot Pick do not bring up the last screen-output from Sidewriter. This is "Examining the file, please wait..." followed by print area estimate messages given after you select "OK". Printing continues, however, and at SuperBASIC JOBS shows Sidewriter still there. I could HOT_PICK Quill and execute Quill commands while printing continued.

G. Jones puts it well enough: if you really must know the background, read thick things such as manuals for QPAC2 or QPTR. But you aren't required to know it all.

Inputs

To test the fonts and print settings/parameters readily, I loaded the given EXAMPLE_ABA and exported it to file EXAMPLE2_EXP. Every combination of print settings attempted worked.

I could not get the EXAMPLE_EXP supplied on the DJC disk to cooperate with Sidewriter, on HW1 or HW2. Usually the go-ahead to print would produce only the message "Examining file, please wait..." but none of the usual following messages on print area estimates. A Control-C to SuperBASIC gave an erratically blinking cursor and slow keyboard response; JOBS showed SuperBASIC, HOTKEY and SIDEWRITER all present, with none suspended. RJOB Sidewriter restored normal cursor and keyboard response speeds. I did not get a chance to examine EXAMPLE_DMP closely.

In any case, the idea is to be printing your own files.

I did in fact give Sidewriter more of a load, exporting from Abacus a year's worth of financial data (ssexp88_aba, about 18K bytes, almost as large as my 1986-1991 financial spreadsheet). It all printed down (six) sheets of fanfold paper.

SIDEWRITER - (CONT'D)

G. Jones mentions almost in passing that Sidewriter prints "plain text files sideways" as well as spreadsheets. So, I indeed pulled a text file off my MUSIC1 disk (Caribbean steel music is often written just as letters). I Printed it to a file using the PRINTER_DAT supplied with Sidewriter. Fine! Two vertical bars and a colon truly looked like a "repeat" rather than a representation I needed to replace. SERIF_FNT, 1-pass I believe. A Bold NLQ "repeat" on the NX-1001 (before it crashed) had printed the odd split v-bar.

IV. Final Comments

Overall, a useful package embedded in a powerful environment.

The documentation does far more than G. Jones was obligated to cover. It's useful to have more than an "Operators' Guide."

At the moment, though, the documentation indeed contains a welter of detail in which some users could get lost at first. Some more intermediate level or summary documentation could help. This could apply to people who want or even need a more "cookbook" approach to functionality—say, managerial types out there using QLs. However, some phrasing in the documentation seems to indicate these 30 pages are an initial effort and that there could be further work.

I can think of a bell here and a whistle there that would be of use. In the case of Sidewriter, this could include notification of no printer available and satisfactory exit, as was true anytime I was on HW1 and couldn't make it across town to HW2, and in particular early efforts when the NX-1001 had just failed.

It could also include a problem with the file selected to print, as happened with the Example_Exp I received (as noted, this was overcome by using the Example_Aba supplied, and, you're supposed to be printing your own files).

But already "This is too long" (Hamlet).

=====

NOTES:

HARDWARE CONFIGURATIONS:

"HW1": QL/68008 with 896K (Trump Card), two DD 3.5" disk drives, membrane keyboard (3d membrane), monochrome monitor (Wood & Wind Computing). (STAR NX-1001 Printer went down with need for repair about when reviewing started).

"HW2": QL with Gold Card, Hermes, Minverva, two ED 3.5" disk drives, Keyboard-90 Interface with 5191 (101-key) Keyboard, QL color monitor, and (working) STAR NX-1000 Printer.

CREDITS:

I likely should repeat the following Sidewriter documentation: "The QMenu system is Copyright Jochen Merz, DJToolkit is Copyright Norman Dunbar and the Pointer Environment software is Copyright Tony Tebby." (*Editor's Note: SIDEWRITER is available from DILWYN JONES COMPUTING, or the many dealers worldwide who stock DJC software. A STEAL for only £15.00*)

FILE TRANSFERS - QL/ARCHIVE to PC/DBASE

Pylesville, Maryland, USA - Thomas Robbins

This is the first of several articles concerning the interchange of data between QL/QDOS applications programs and MSDOS applications programs. While I have both a QL and an MSDOS computer, by choice I do my work on the QL. Often it may involve either database information from a computer at work, or database information that will have to go into a computer at work.

This article will focus on transferring records from an Archive or Xchange database to the MSDOS de facto standard, dBase.

Begin by loading Archive, or loading Xchange and selecting an Archive task. Use the open or look command to access the data base you want to export to Dbase. Now type in:

export <ENTER>

You should now have, at the command line: export "" and the menu prompt at the top of the screen should say :

ENTER THE FILE NAME

Enter the full file name, including the drive/device at this point (ie. FLP1_Myfile). You do not need to enter a file extension. Archive will give it an '_exp' extension automatically. If you have the memory, and a RAM disc, it speeds the process up to export to this instead of floppys. Using the Gazet dbf example supplied on the original microdrive, and exporting to RAM1_Gazet_exp, what you now have is:

```
"country$","continent$","capital$","languages$","currency$","pop","gdp","area"  
"AFGHANISTAN","ASIA","KABUL","PUSHTU,DARI","AFGHANI",19.5,110,657  
"ALBANIA","EUROPE","TIRANE","ALBANIAN","LEK",2.5,5  
"ANGOLA","AFRICA","LUANDA","PORTUGUESE","KWANZA",6.4,588,1247  
"ARGENTINA","S.AMERICA","BUENOS AIRES","SPANISH","PESO",25.7,1990,2777
```

and on down to:

```
"ZAIRE","AFRICA","KINSHASA","BANTU,FRENCH","ZAIRE",25.6,155,2344  
"ZAMBIA","AFRICA","LUSAKA","BANTU,ENGLISH","KWACHA",5.1,488,753
```

As with most things associated with Sir Clive, this is an "almost, but not quite" standard file. The first line, which consists of field names, prevents this from being a standard comma delimited file which can be imported into Dbase (and a large number of other 'PC' programs).

Using an editor {such as EMACS (available from the QUANTA Library), Ark's SPY, or Digital Precision's EDITOR} remove the first line to convert the file to standard comma delimited format. Make certain the lines are not split or truncated !

Now that you have the file in a standard form, it must be transfered to an IBM formatted disc. There are several commercial programs available to conveniently do this - XOVER, MEDIA MANAGER, DISCOVER. There are also programs in the Quanta Library such as QLIBM that will do this.

FILE TRANSFERS - CONT'D)

At this point, you should have a standard comma delimited file on an IBM/MSDOS format disc and it is time to turn on the PC. Copy the exported file to the Dbase directory on the PC.

Load Dbase on the PC. Unlike Archive, Dbase uses fixed length fields and to import a file, you must first define the file structure. At the Dbase dot prompt, enter the command 'create'. You must define each field of the new Dbase database. This definition includes the field name, it's type (character or numeric, and its length.

Once you have the database structure defined, you can import your Archive file. Use the Dbase command 'APPEND FROM GAZET EXP DELIM'. Of course, substitute whatever you have named your file for the GAZET_EXP example. You now have your data imported into MSDOS Dbase.

The short Archive program below eliminates the need to use an editor to manually edit the file for import into Dbase. Once you have 'opened' or 'looked' your Archive file, run this program. It will list your database structure, offer you the option of printing out the database structure, prompt you for filenames, and then create a comma delimited file for import into Dbase. You will still have to move it to an IBM/MSDOS formatted disk.

This program, and several others for transferring data to MSDOS applications, will be submitted to the QUANTA Library shortly.

```
proc bye
mode 1
print : print : print "FILE TRANSLATION COMPLETED"
print " USE XOVER, DISCOVER, QLIBM ETC. TO TRANSFER TO MSDOS DISK"
stop
endproc
proc CDF
cls
let MARK=1
print : print
print "Enter full file name of transfer file "
print " -->include the device name"
print " (examples: flp1_myfile_xfr, ram2_data_ibm)"
input FNAME$
cls
print "CREATING STANDARD COMMA DELIMITED FILE AS ";FNAME$
spoolon fname$
print "FILE CREATED : PRESS ENTER TO BEGIN TRANSLATION"
let s$=getkey()
cls
print : print
print "TRANSLATING TO COMMA DELIMITED FORMAT"
print at 4,18;"OF ";count();" RECORDS TRANSLATED"
all
print at 4,10;MARK;
let fnum=numfld()
```

FILE TRANSFERS - (CONT'D)

```
let n=0
while n<fnum-1
if fieldt(n)=0: lprint fieldv(n);",": endif
if fieldt(n)=1: lprint """"+fieldv(n)+""""+",": endif
let n=n+1
endwhile
if fieldt(n)=0: lprint fieldv(n): endif
if fieldt(n)=1: lprint """";fieldv(n);""": endif
let MARK=MARK+1
endall
spooloff
print at 15,0;"PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE": let L$=getkey()
bye
endproc
proc printout
cls
print "PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR PRINTER IS ON LINE"
print "PRESS ANY KEY FOR PRINT OUT OF DATABASE STRUCTURE"
let DUMMY$=getkey()
let fnum=numfld()
lprint "This Data Base contains ";fnum;" fields"
lprint "FIELD"; tab 10;"FIELD NAME"; tab 30;"FIELD TYPE"
lprint
let n=0
while n<fnum
lprint n; tab 10;fieldn(n); tab 30;
if fieldt(n)=0: lprint "Numeric": endif
if fieldt(n)=1: lprint "Character": endif
let n=n+1
endwhile
last
lprint "Records in this file: ";count()
mode 1
stats
endproc
proc START
print "CDF IS A UTILITY TO TRANSLATE ARCHIVE FILES INTO STANDARD
COMMA DELIMITED"
print
print "FILES FOR IMPORT INTO DBASE, LOTUS AND OTHER MSDOS
PROGRAMS"
print
print "COPYRIGHT 1993 THOMAS ROBBINS / SAMURAI CAT SOFTWARE"
print
print "THIS UTILITY IS PUBLIC DOMAIN AND MAY BE FREELY
DISTRIBUTED"
print
print "PRESS ANY KEY TO START"
let pause$=getkey()
```


FILE TRANSFERS - (CONT'D)

```
stats
endproc
proc stats
mode 0
cls
let fnum=numfld()
print at 2,50;"This Data Base"
print at 3,50;"contains ";fnum;" fields"
print at 0,0;"FIELD"; tab 10;"FIELD NAME"; tab 30;"FIELD TYPE"
print
let n=0
while n<fnum
print n; tab 10;fieldn(n); tab 30;
if fieldt(n)=0: print "Numeric": endif
if fieldt(n)=1: print "Text": endif
let n=n+1
endwhile
last
print at 5,50;"Records in this file: ";count()
input at 20,0;"ENTER P for print out X for eXit T for Translate";choice$
if upper(choice$)="X": mode 1: endif
if upper(choice$)="P": printout: endif
if upper(choice$)="T":cdf: endif
endproc
```

In the next article, I will discuss how to move data the other way - from Dbase to Archive.

QUICK NOTE for Gold Card Users

Pylesville, Maryland, USA - Thomas Robbins

Some 1.44 Meg drives can be set by the jumper pins to NOT check for the additional hole that identifies the disk as a high density disk. I inadvertently set my drive that way, and find that it automatically formats regular (cheaper) 3 1/2" 720K disks to 1.44 megs without any problems.

This leads to the problem of how to format a 720K disk to 720k for exchange with other people. An undocumented (at least in the documentation I received with my Gold Card) keyword/command is FLP DENSITY. This command takes 1 parameter - either D, H, or E and specifies the default format of the disk, where:

E = 3.2 Meg Extra high density
H = 1.44 Meg High density
D = 720 K Double density

The Gold Card automatically checks to see whether the media/drive combination will support the density specified - my 720K 5 1/4 still only formats to 720K.

MEGATOOLKIT REVIEW

DILWYN JONES COMPUTING

Shelby Township, Michigan, USA - John J. Impellizzeri

Megatoolkit adds over 200 new extensions to SuperBASIC (226 by my count!) that can be roughly grouped into the following categories: channels, screen handling, system, system traps, devices, basic utilities and miscellaneous. These new commands and functions can be used to help make your computing life with the QL easier.

The toolkit is available on disk or EPROM and can be used on expanded and unexpanded machines. If you get the EPROM version, you also get a copy of the toolkit on disk so that you can still use the extensions if you need to have another EPROM plugged in. The EPROM version is probably better if you have an unexpanded machine as it doesn't take much RAM. The disk version needs about 16K of RAM.

Megatoolkit is said to be compatible with JM, JS, and Minerva 1.92 ROMs. I found it to also work on an MG ROM and Minerva 1.97. It is also compatible with other toolkits such as Toolkit 2, Turbo Toolkit and Toolkit 3. I have TK2, TK3, Turbo and Qliberator runtimes and the pointer environment loaded in my Gold Card QL along with Megatoolkit and found no problems that could be traced to Megatoolkit. Some of the new extensions are more useful if you have TK2, but neither it nor any other toolkits are required to use it.

Looking at some of the new extensions it would appear that some of them replace SuperBASIC (SB) commands. Actually they complement them. An example is the MegaTK 'WINDO' command. The standard SB command lets you set up a window with a channel number, width, height, and its origin. If you want a border around the window you have to give the BORDER command. If you want the window cleared before you start to use it you have to use the CLS command. MegaTK's WINDO lets you do all this in one command. The manual states that SB commands are not replaced to prevent compatibility problems and also to allow the new commands to be compiled. Other extensions allow you to do more than the equivalent SB or TK2 command. An example of this is the WINS command. Similar to TK2's WMON and WTV, but different in that you can configure how you want the default windows set up.

The defaults built into the toolkit can be altered or you can change them temporarily with another new command. Some other new window related commands allow you to easily use new fonts in a specific window (8 fonts are included and most standard QL fonts should work), easily obtain the attributes of an existing window, set the paper, ink and strip colors with one command, invert the ink and strip colors in a window while leaving the paper alone (handy for highlighting text), find the cursor and graphics cursor positions, and changing the spacing of characters by pixel without changing CSIZE. There are commands to save and load screens to memory faster than a RAM disk. These and the window commands above support the Minerva second screen. A handy UNFLASH command will stop the flashing pixels of a mode 4 screen loaded with the QL in mode 8.

Commands and functions relating to channels include the ability to test if a channel has been closed, find the next available channel that can be opened, testing a channel to see if it can be output to (useful with the pointer environment loaded), find out what type of OPEN command was used when a file was opened, and functions to extend the OPEN command so that any errors such as a device or file not found can be easily trapped and acted upon rather than stopping the program.

MEGATOOLKIT - (CONT'D)

System related extensions let you check to see if a specific SB extension is present in the machine rather than calling it and getting an error, another lets you remove an extension. While the memory the extension used can't be recovered, SB will have forgotten all about it. Still another lets you rename an extension. This is great if you find extensions awkward or lengthy to type in, or if there are conflicts between multiple toolkits in the machine. You can rename them to whatever you find easier to type or to avoid a conflict with another. There is a function to determine the type of variable (such as string, integer, floating point) given the variable's name.

Other functions return the location of the system variables, BASIC, and the channel information area. SuperBASIC PEEK and POKE are extended to allow easier access to the system variables and BASIC. TK2 contains functions and commands to control the various jobs you may have running in the QL, and MegaTK builds upon these with some useful new ones with a couple of particularly handy commands. ISJOB will determine if a specific job is present in the QL and the result can be used to take whatever action necessary. RJOBS is similar to TK2's RJOB, but it allows multiple jobs to be removed by ID or all jobs except SuperBASIC.

More system extensions allow memory to be reserved (GRAB) and released (RELEASE) in the common heap area. This can be done while other jobs are running unlike the reserved procedure area. The RELEASE command also allows the memory to be given back if a different toolkit function originally reserved it. There are functions to determine the total amount of system RAM as well as the amount of free memory in kilobytes rather than in bytes that some toolkits give. Two functions give information about any ROM you might have plugged into the QL or loaded into RAM.

An interesting set of extensions control what the author calls 'Wotsits'. What is a wotsit?? The manual defines it as: "Wotsits allow you to name certain blocks of memory and refer to them by name rather than by address. Once the block of memory is created and named any program running concurrently or later can access the memory by name." At first these sounded like the 'things' of the pointer environment, but the manual goes on to explain that 'wotsits' are different than 'things'. I have only a general idea of how 'things' work so I can't give detailed explanations of the differences. Suffice it to say that 'wotsits' can be shared by any program running and can be accessed from other languages besides SuperBASIC. The MegaTK manual does have details on how to set up and use 'wotsits'.

System trap commands allow you to use the QDOS trap calls from SB. You should have knowledge of the internal workings of QDOS and/or a QDOS reference book before using these. A somewhat easier to use trap command (VDU), lets you give the equivalent of a long SB command to control the screen.

Device extensions include the ability to set up eight user defined directories and easily set the TK2 program and data directories to any of the eight. If you find yourself changing the TK2 defaults quite often these extensions will save you some typing. Even if you don't have TK2 the extensions can still be used to set up eight default directories and use those directories in your programs. Functions are available to find out what the defaults are currently set to.

A command to direct the keyboard queue to a certain channel is included as well as two functions to put characters and strings into the keyboard queue. Other commands and

MEGATOOLKIT - (CONT'D)

functions can find out the name of a disk, the amount of free space left on it and detect if the Level 2 drivers are present on a device. While you can do these functions with standard SuperBASIC, these extensions make it much easier and return the info in a variable for you to do whatever you need to. There are many other functions to easily read and set the information in a file's header along with some that let you do file maintenance (FORMAT, DELETE, LBYTES and SBYTES) within a program and return an error code indicating success or type of error rather than stopping the program.

Basic utilities are a collection of extensions for dealing with BASIC programs, their variables, and procedures. Some examples include finding out if a variable has been defined yet, finding the line number of a particular procedure or function, finding out how an INPUT statement was ended (enter, esc, break, etc). There is a WAIT command. This functions like PAUSE only pressing a key will not end the WAIT early like PAUSE does.

Miscellaneous extensions include some extended logic functions, the ability to find and change the key used to change jobs on the QL (normally CTRL-C), change the keyboard repeat and delay settings, and force capslock on or off. While the keyboard functions above can be changed by poking the proper system variable you have to know what address to poke. The new extensions do the hard part for you. Others include finding the versions of QDOS, pointer environment and window manager. You can also find what NET number your QL is set to and the current BAUD rate.

The manual for Megatoolkit states that most of the extensions can be compiled with either Turbo or QLiberator. Because there are so many useful new extensions the author does allow you to include a run time version of the toolkit with your program if you distribute it without having to pay royalties as long as you follow the conditions set in the manual. The run time versions are included on the disk.

There are two demo programs on the disk along with documentation for each that show examples on how to use many of the toolkit extensions. It is well worth looking at and trying these to see how the new commands work. Megatoolkit comes with an excellent 80 page manual. With the manual and the demos nearby, you will have no problem using Megatoolkit.

Megatoolkit contains many new useful extensions and shortcuts to using QDOS and SuperBASIC. If you do any SuperBASIC programming at all you will find something in Megatoolkit to make it easier.

Megatoolkit was written by Michael A. Crowe and is available from Dilwyn Jones Computing and can be supplied in either ROM or DISK versions. See DJC's advert elsewhere in this issue.

GREY WOLF - A REVIEW

DILWYN JONES COMPUTING

Cranston, Rhode Island, USA - A. PARKER LEWIS III

"YOU HAVE DIVED WITH OPEN AIRING FLAPS! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE
DONE THAT! ANOTHER GO (Y/N)? Y"

...Oops...but how do you close the flaps? Hmm maybe "A".

GREY WOLF - (CONT'D)

"YOU HAVE TRIED TO DIVE WITH THE DIESEL ENGINE! THE EXHAUST KILLS THE CREW! ANOTHER GO (Y/N)? Y"

Rats...Maybe "E" has something to do with the engines.

"YOU HAVEN'T BROUGHT DOWN YOUR PERISCOPE! SO THE WATER SPLASHES INTO YOUR SUBMARINE! ANOTHER GO (Y/N)? Y"

Well. I guess maybe I had better read the directions.

This was my first introduction to "Grey Wolf," a World War II submarine simulation game. Upon boot, up you are asked three questions; if you want to hear engine noise, if you want a training mission, and the degree of difficulty 1-5 with 5 being the most difficult; the default to the first two questions is yes, the last question needs direct input. After answering all the questions you arrive on the bridge; the controls are quite easy to read, the graphics are adequate but nothing really fancy; not Nintendo, but that isn't needed for this part of the simulation game.

There are three different areas involved in running the simulation. First, as I said, you start off in the bridge which is where most of the action takes place. Next one can activate the periscope by pressing "P" and then "V", for view. You are now looking out towards the bow of the submarine. From the View area you can see the enemy; I actually did three or four times. This is also where you fire the torpedoes; providing you open the flaps first; more than once I sank myself because I didn't open the flaps. Again the graphics are adequate, a little better than the bridge; again not Nintendo.

The final area used in the simulation is the chartroom. This is accessed by the "C" key, logical for chart. This presents a grid of latitude and longitude and shows a representation of the submarine and usually an enemy. The latitude and longitude of the "enemy" are also shown as well as it's distance.

First, it should be remembered that "Grey Wolf" isn't as much of a game as it is a simulation. It takes time to play and requires patience; there are many times when very little activity takes place; when you are trying to catch up to and intercept the "enemy" can take several minutes. Even after you have caught up to the "enemy" it takes a lot of skill to be able to attack. Therefore, this is not a game for people who expect a lot of action, especially many young people. Like chess, this is a simulation game that takes skill, strategy and a lot of patience. It can be very challenging to catch up to the "enemy" without being sunk by either depth charges or passing planes; in several hours of play I have yet to be able to catch up to a ship to within periscope range, much less sink it. It is a good simulation.

The first problem with the game is, I think, with the QL itself. Only one key press at a time registers on any activity. This can become very difficult on the bridge, especially during an air raid; as the warning flashes you cannot take any evasive action until the flashing stops. When you want to dive each key must be pressed carefully; "A" to close the air flap, "E" to go from diesel to electric power, "P" to lower the periscope, "K" to close the torpedo flaps, "R" to increase the hydroplane angle to dive, "N" to increase the ballast, finally the up arrow to increase speed so the submarine would dive. All these keys have to be pressed individually or else your action won't be effective; many times I have dived thinking that I had closed the air flaps, I had pressed the key quickly, only to suddenly see the water rising and then to read:

GREY WOLF - (CONT'D)

"YOU HAVE DIVED WITH OPEN AIRING FLAPS! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT!
ANOTHER GO (Y/N)? Y"

The key press hadn't registered. This happens in other areas as well. I have sunk myself more than once knowing I had opened the torpedo flap only to find out I had fired a torpedo without "opening the flaps". This is, I believe, a problem with the QL and not the simulation; but this must be taken into consideration when writing and playing the simulation.

The one great difficulty I have with the simulation is the graphics in the chartroom. First of all you can't tell which direction any of the ships are headed, it would be nice to have the ships actually pointed in the direction they were traveling. When you are really close to the "enemy" it becomes very difficult to see who is where because the images merge when you are closer than two miles apart. It would make fighting much easier if there was a much greater detailed close battle map or view. Finally the distances and the latitude, longitude do not update themselves while you are viewing the chartroom; you must go back to the bridge and then back to the chartroom to see any variation on the ships positions.

In the more difficult levels of the game, air raids become very difficult to work around. I would like to see some way of controlling the air raids so one can become more proficient at maneuvering and chasing the "enemy". Also depth charge attacks came when there were no other ships around, how could this happen with no other ships to launch the attacks? Bombs also hit with no planes having been in the vicinity recently. Finally the sounding indicator, which is supposed to indicate the direction of the "enemy" when it was within ten miles of the submarine, never seemed to work when I was near the enemy.

In summary, this is a very good simulation. I think with a little work and some corrections it could be even more enjoyable to play. But it seems this simulation is not for most young people. I showed it to about half a dozen young people and none of them showed any interest in playing the simulation, it took too much patience and there wasn't enough action for them to enjoy the simulation. I guess its for us old folks, who can remember the days before Nintendo.

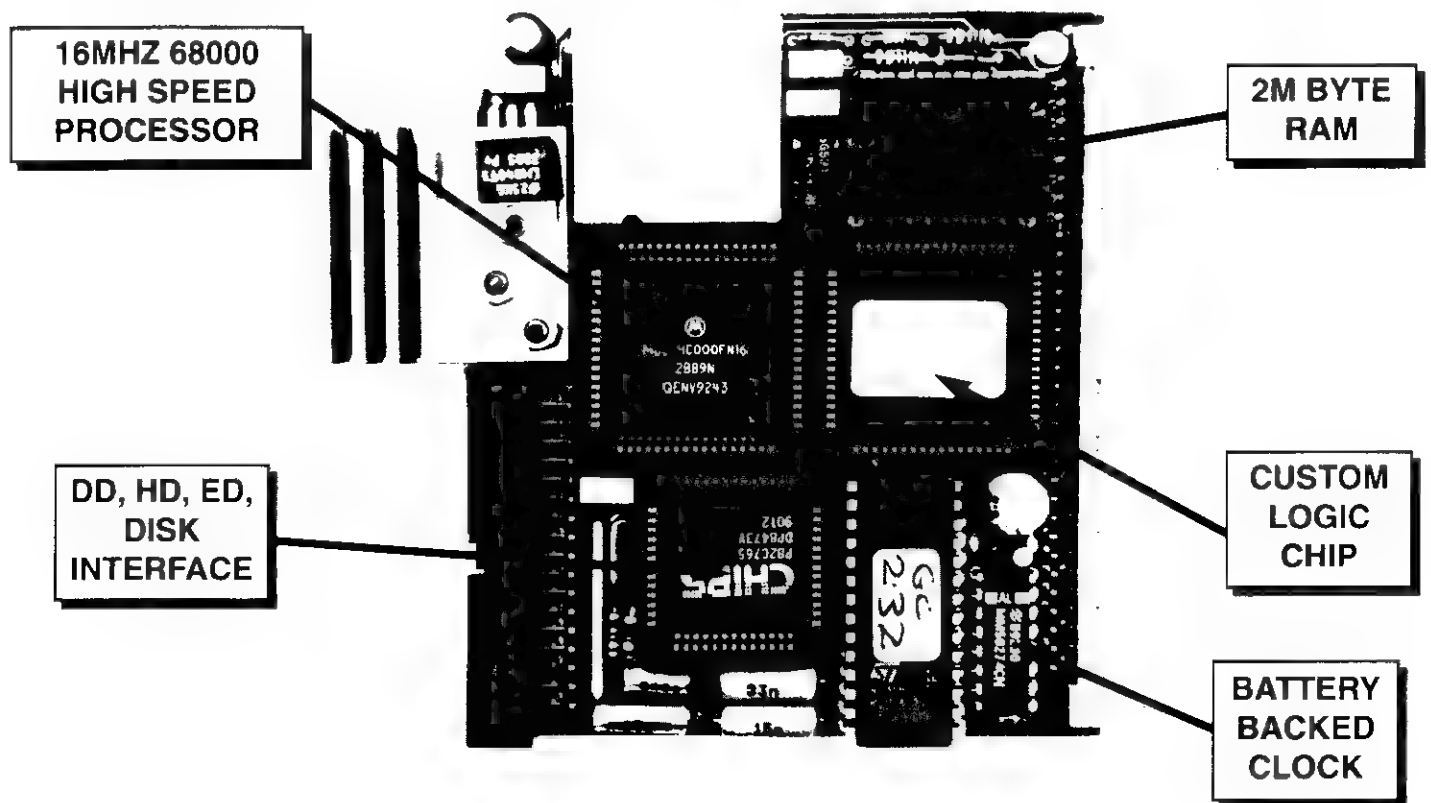
NEWS FROM DIGITAL PRECISION

London, GREAT BRITAIN - Freddy Vachha

We have recently released our latest update to 'PERFECTION SPECIAL EDITION'. This version has a massive 35 million megabyte file handling capacity, or put another way, 4 billion lines or paragraphs (seems just about the right size for IQLR).

We realise that these upper limits are ridiculously high, but the next limit down was a mere 500 megabytes maximum file size. Perfection handles memory automatically and in chunks, making VIRTUAL memory attainable i.e. say using a hard disk as if it were RAM. With the advent of the QXL and its use on PC's with hard disks exceeding 500 megabytes (hard drives in excess of 3GB are already available) we thought we should go for the higher limit. (See our adverts in this issue.)

MIRACLE SYSTEMS



QL GOLD CARD

£225 inc. (£200 outside EC)

This is the expansion that has been revolutionising the QL. It is very easy to fit, it simply plugs into the expansion port at the left hand of the QL, and once fitted it will instantly increase the execution speed of the QL by about 4 times due to the presence of a 16MHz 68000 on board. There is 2M of fast 16 bit RAM of which QDOS sees a contiguous 1920K. The remainder is used for shadowing the QL's ROM and display memory and for the GOLD CARD's own code.

There is a disk interface which can access 3 mechanisms (4 with the DISK ADAPTER) of three different densities, DD (double density, 720K), HD (high density, 1.44M) and ED (extra high density, 3.2M) in any mix. The disk interface connector is the same type that was fitted to the Trump Card so most QL compatible disk drives can be used.

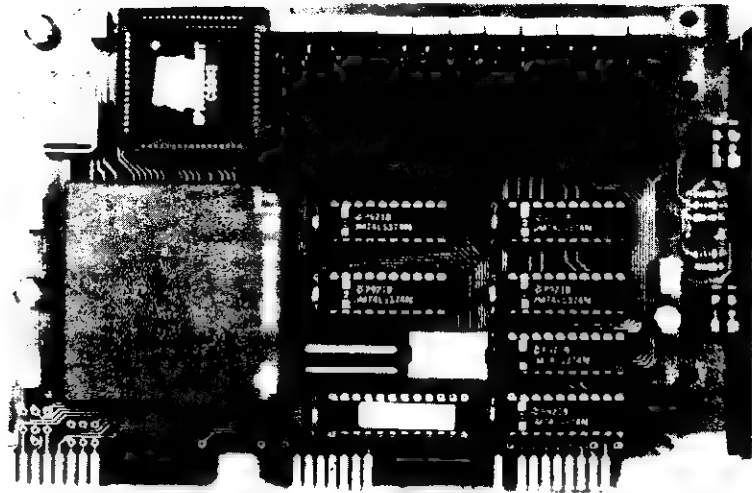
Please note: that DD drives still give a capacity of 720K per diskette.
Our DUAL ED DISK DRIVE allows the GOLD CARD to access DD, HD and ED diskettes.

Another feature is the battery backed clock. When the QL is switched on the contents of the clock are copied into the QL's clock so that the time and date are correct. The firmware in the ROM gives the GOLD CARD all the functionality of the Trump Card like TOOLKIT II and there is a sub-directory system for floppy and RAM disks.

Physically the GOLD CARD is about half the size of the TRUMP CARD and so fits almost all within the QL. Its current consumption is well under allowable maximum so no special power supply is required. The GOLD CARD comes with a 14 day money back guarantee and a 2 year warranty.

MIRACLE

THE QXL



The QXL turns the common PC into a QL compatible. The package comprises a half card that plugs into an 8 or 16 bit standard ISA slot and a diskette loaded with a QDOS compatible operating system and a SuperBasic compatible interpreter. After installation simply type QXL and the PC will appear to be a QL allowing QL programs to be run from QL format diskettes.

The card itself has a 32 bit 68EC040 processor running at 20MHz which gives a good turn of speed. This processor has access to its own RAM and so performance is virtually independent of the host PC whether it has an 8088 or a Pentium. In fact the PC is used purely as an I/O system giving QL programs access to the PC's floppy disk, hard disk, keyboard, display, serial and parallel ports. The card itself has QL style network ports to allow connection to a QL network. The minimum PC specification required is an XT with EGA display and a spare standard slot.

Varying RAM sizes from 1M up to 8M can be supplied. The smaller capacities can be upgraded to the larger ones and the cost is simply the price difference. Not all the RAM is available to the user programs; the 1M equates roughly with a TRUMP CARD QL memory size and the 2M with a GOLD CARD QL.

During the lifetime of the QXL we intend to enhance the software to make use of the new hardware facilities of the PC such as SVGA graphics. As has been our policy with the TRUMP CARD and GOLD CARD we intend to provide software upgrades free of charge.

SYSTEMS

QXL prices

1M	£295	(£255)
2M	£325	(£280)
5M	£410	(£355)
8M	£495	(£430)

(prices in brackets for outside EC)



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Fed up of DIGITAL PRECISION telling you how very good their software is?

✓ "As you might surmise by this time, I am impressed by QMATHS's abilities. Having noted that DIGITAL PRECISION's advertising tends to be loaded with superlatives (incredible, ultimate, superb come to mind), I had approached this evaluation with some scepticism. That scepticism has vanished." > INTERNATIONAL QL REPORT (IQLR, available from Miracle Systems) May/June 1993 issue, Official Review by M.Laverne commissioned by IQLR (who bought their review copy of the program).

✓ "PERFECTION is an exciting, full-flavoured, general purpose word processor of incredible capacity... PERFECTION has now been outshone by the recently released PERFECTION SPECIAL EDITION... The discoveries began to trip over themselves as PERFECTION SE responded to the keyboard with unexpected speed and intelligence... PERFECTION SE is blindingly fast at most things, and you are never left waiting for it. PERFECTION is everything that Quill never became: easy to use, very flexible, loaded with genuinely useful features, cleanly multi-tasking, capacious and incredibly fast. The SPECIAL EDITION offers 12 cylinder power and luxury to an already impressive package." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD magazine Official Review, April 1993 issue, by THE Mike Lloyd of Keyword Index / New QL User Guide fame.

✓ "I find PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER an outstandingly good program that really does allow highly professional documents to be produced. For your interest I have included a few samples of work done for school using a combination of PERFECTION, PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER, QUICKLASER and EYE-Q. You will be pleased to know that the quality has been rated so highly that people do not believe it can really have been done with just QL... I must stress that I am already highly impressed with, and very satisfied by, the performance of PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER and all the other DP programs that I use... I seem to learn something new that can be done almost each time I use the program. Very many thanks for helping to keep the QL ahead of the field." > Martin J Neave, Headteacher, Watton County Jnr School, Brandon Rd, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6AL (unsolicited letter dated 18 May 1993 ordering more programs: Mr Neave had paid full price for everything).

✓ "LIGHTNING SPECIAL EDITION accelerates QL operation as nothing else does... more than 10x is achievable and 2x-4x is typical... I could not fault LIGHTNING SPECIAL EDITION on anything. It is a clear winner and a best buy at £49.95." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD magazine Official Review, April 1990 issue, by Ron Massey, who wrote EDITOR (bought full price) was "Superb" in an earlier review.

✓ "PERFECTION is well named" > R.H.Petford, Kingston Hill, Surrey, KT2 7LJ (unsolicited letter received May 25, 1993: another full price purchaser & upgrader).

✓ "When my ideal program finally arrived in the form of PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER, it surpassed all my expectations... PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER (is) in a class of its own, and makes QL the only QL desktop publishing program for the very serious user... Until Digital Precision released PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER, my opinion was that the use I could make of desktop publishing was mainly restricted to short documents... PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER is a very versatile program... The illustrations for this series of articles have all been produced on PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER... My printer is a BROTHER 9-pin dot matrix printer. It does illustrate the very high quality that can be obtained from PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER even when using a simple printer." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD magazine Guide to desktop publishing ("A Question of Dots"), January 1992 to December 1992 issues: the reviewer had bought PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER, PERFECTION SE, FONT ENLARGER, TOOLBOXES, QUICKLASER etc from Digital Precision all at full price.

✓ "I am aware that over the years Digital Precision has given considerable support to the QL scene but seldom, if ever, can there have been such estimable service as I recently encountered with PERFECTION PLUS." > The Hon. W.D.R. Spens, Bridgewater, Somerset, TA5 1HG, QUANTA magazine, March 1992 issue. Mr Spens bought a lot of his software from Digital Precision, all at full price of course.

✓ "The Digital Precision Desktop Publisher was rightly hailed as an extraordinary programming achievement when it was released two years ago. Mike Lloyd casts a professional eye over Digital Precision's latest page-making blockbuster (PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER) and finds plenty to be pleased about... there is unlikely to be a single program of such magnitude and quality (as PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER) written for the Sinclair QL." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD Official Review, August 1989 issue, by M.Lloyd, who personally bought all this at full price.

✓ "EDITOR is a liberation. After Quill, it was like jumping from an aquarium into the sea. It has become part of my professional life... Everyone is now writing about the excellence of PERFECTION. I have not tried it, not having any perceived need for it (having EDITOR)." > Suzanne Cronje, QUANTA magazine, May 1992 issue, page 2, Ms Cronje naturally had paid the full price for her copy of EDITOR SE.

✓ "I have found (PERFECTION) to be simply excellent, fast, packed with features and very well thought out. I can find little to say that will convey just how good this program is, except to quote Digital Precision's own advertising: PERFECTION will blow your socks off. PERFECTION is the program that Quill users have been waiting for." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD magazine first Official Review, May 1991 issue.

✓ "Digital Precision (DP) decided to begin work on a replacement for Quill which would be very quick, simple to use and contain lots of excellent features - something upon which DP have built a very strong reputation in the QL market... Overall, the speed-up (of just the first release of PERFECTION - it is much faster now) on even a humble QL with Trump Card is amazing when compared with Quill (or any other word processor). On top of this, the program provides many excellent and well thought out features, each of which is easy to use... (it) is certainly years ahead of the competition on the QL (and even on many PCs)." > R.Mellor, c/o CGH Services, Cwm Gwen Hall, Pencader, Dyfed SA39 9HA; Official Review of the very first version of PERFECTION in QL TECHNICAL REVIEW issue 7; and the reviewer personally bought his own copy of this program, and many others at full price, from Digital Precision. Earlier QLTR reviews pronounced LIGHTNING (just the standard version) superior to the competition and ADVENTURE CREATION TOOL excellent.

✓ "As a recent user of PERFECTION PLUS SE, may I add my thanks and praises to the ones I am sure you have already received... keep up the excellent work." > R Slawson, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0BP (unsolicited letter from full price purchaser).

✓ "At about 360,000 words, the Mega SPELLCHECKER dictionary does not have much competition, on any computer! (Spellchecking) is about four times as fast as the best figures I have seen with other checkers on QL and PC." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD magazine official review of PERFECTION spellchecker, September 1992 issue, by Bryan Davies of Troubleshooter repete (review copies of all the competing products supplied to SINCLAIR QL WORLD by their respective publishers).

✓ "I have been using PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER for about eighteen months now... what you can do with it is colossal... I got Digital Precision's QUICKLASER. The results are as good as (Digital Precision) says in its advertisements..." > P.Hamill, Peterborough, Cambs PE8 6RH, QUANTA magazine, Volume 9 issues 4/12 Mr Hamill (full price purchaser) then makes suggestions to users on optimal page sizes.

✓ "Once again I would like to say thank you for your help. I would like to tell the world what nice guys you are but unfortunately I have no contact with the outside world." > J.Bailey, Godshill, Ventnor PO38 3JJ (full price purchaser, 24 May 1993).

✓ "PC CONQUEROR GOLD SPECIAL EDITION is an excellent product, accompanied, as so often with Digital Precision software, by a comprehensive and informative manual. The program does a difficult job, and does it well... Overall, this program is much faster, more compatible and capable..." > SINCLAIR QL WORLD Official Review, March 1993 issue, by M.Knight (bought many DP programs full price).

✓ "Many thanks for the update of PERFECTION SPECIAL EDITION. I am suitably impressed. Congratulations on producing the only word processor that I know that offers the best of all worlds as far as formatting is concerned. After Quill, PERFECTION is like a breath of fresh air." > Geoff Wicks, 1097HL Amsterdam, Netherlands (unsolicited letter dated 13 June 1993: all software including LIGHTNING PERFECTION SE, PRO PUBLISHER, CONQUEROR SE etc. purchased at full price).

✓ "All I can say about QMATHS is: WOW!" > Robin Wyke-Holloway, Salisbury SP5 4WG (unsolicited letter received April 1993: Mr Holloway is a full price purchaser).

✓ "Having used a range of desktop publishers on the Atari ST & Amiga, I admit I am very impressed with the superior performance of PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER. It contains everything required" > SINCLAIR QL WORLD January 1989 issue, article entitled "6 of the Best" which also praised five other new Digital Precision programs.

✓ "May I take this opportunity to say that I have, in the past, found the software you have supplied me with (LIGHTNING etc.) to be of extremely high standard, on a par with that found in industry-standard PC packages. Keep up the good work. Without your quality software, I would be forced to abandon the QL and go to a PC." > G. Reynolds, Crosby, Liverpool L23 0SS (unsolicited letter dated April 2 1993, placing a further order for DP software: all programs old & new were purchased at full price).

✓ This twenty is but a casual selection, drawing only on extracts from letters received by DIGITAL PRECISION in the last few days and from articles (in respected, independent QL journals) that just happened to be to hand. If we really had to, we could locate about 1,100 equally complimentary recent communications (the figure has been carefully arrived at by sampling all our correspondence files): pleasant though such a trawl would be, we have more pressing things to do, like keep refining our programs! In case any scepticism still exists, we refer potential purchasers of our products to pages 18 and 19 of the September 1988 issue of Sinclair QL World, which contained three to four hundred other unsolicited quotations from happy Digital Precision customers (together with the customer's name and whereabouts), all of whom had bought their DP programs. That collection covered only three programs (and only partly - we ran out of space) and predated our best software (LIGHTNING SE, PERFECTION (+SE), PROFESSIONAL PUBLISHER, PC CONQUEROR (+SE) etc). We reproduce those pages below, duly reduced to fit (no magnifying lens supplied, nor eyesight lawsuits solicited). Don't think DP hides behind small print: send an SAE for a full-size copy, or ask for one free while ordering!



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Let me start with a few historical notes. During the development of the QL, much effort was devoted to keeping QDOS (and SuperBasic) as compact as possible. As a result, performance was not all it could have been, opening the way for system accelerators such as "Lightning".

The original "Lightning" first appeared in May 1988, with DP's usual "brash (but honest)" (Freddy Vachha's own words !) advertising. In July 1989, "Lightning Special Edition" burst forth (how else to describe the purple prose accompanying it ?). Finally, "Lightning Gold Card Special Edition" (a real mouthful, to be referred to hereafter as "LGCSE" or just Lightning !) appeared rather quietly as of about June last year.

How does LGCSE function ? To put it in human terms, QDOS "knows" where its routines are by consulting a "vector table", a list of pointers showing where each routine is located in RAM. LGCSE resets these pointers to redirect QDOS to new routines optimized for speed. As a result, the new, faster routines are utilized with no change to the operating system itself.

LGCSE comes with a 44 page manual, not unusually large by DP's standards. The style is considerably more new-user friendly than many I have encountered (with some manuals, "encounter" is a highly descriptive term !).

Installation of LGCSE is simplicity itself, using the supplied "CONFIGURE_BAS", and virtually fool-proof. Three windows show progress of the installation. One window tells (or asks) you what to do next; a second tells you what, if anything, has gone wrong. The third window gives a running report on the installation. At each step, you are offered a default setting; if you are not sure, the default will generally be a reasonable choice. If the final product is not to your liking, escape to the beginning of the process is possible in order to begin anew.

If you are happy simply to relax and enjoy a faster machine, there is no more to be done once LGCSE is installed. However, if you are a "knob-twiddler", there is ample room to tune and tweak to your heart's content.

The extensions provided by LGCSE fall into three categories: text, graphics, and mathematics. Each category has a number of new keywords accessible from SuperBasic. There is neither time nor room here to give a complete rundown on the available keywords (After all, DP needed 44 pages to do just that !).

Text scrolling is controlled by `_lngZIP n`, where `n` may have any integer value from -3 up. Negative values provide smooth pixel scrolling; positive values yield line scrolling. If you would like to see an ultra smooth scroll, quite readable as it glides up the screen, try `_lngZIP -1`. On the other hand, if you're in a hurry, try `_lngZIP 2` for 4 times normal speed. Be careful, though, large values of `n` can result in highly bothersome jumpy scrolling.

Use `_lngINC #i,n` to control line spacing for channel `i`, where `i` must refer to a screen or console window. `n` is the number of pixel-lines incremented for each text line printed. Normally, `n` will be set to character height. `n = 0` will yield overprinting of the text. Nominally, `i` may be any positive integer but be reasonable !

LIGHTNING S/E - (CONT'D)

A "drain" is provided to skip over screen printing. If, for example, you COPY a large text file to the screen but only want to see the latter portion of the file, type CTRL/Z. Now all output to the screen is "sent down the drain", while the actual output continues at an alarming rate (DP claims about 100 times normal screen printing). Any keypress re-enables screen printing, if you're quick enough. `_lngKEYSET` allows a change if you don't like CTRL/Z.

A similar device, "nul", is usable for much the same purpose as CTRL/Z but can be used within a program. To use the device, open a channel in the usual way. For example, OPEN #4, nul will open channel 4 to the device. Now, any output to channel 4 will just vanish, fast.

The manual contains a suggested trial of "nul": dump 100 strings of 30,000 bytes each to ramdisk (the fastest device available on the QL), first without and then with "nul". I obtained times of 25 seconds without and 2 seconds with "nul".

Graphics enhancements are switched on with `_lngGRAF n`, where *n* is any positive integer. `_lngGRAF 0` switches the enhancements off. Line lengths may be adjusted with the command `_lngLINEWANGLE n`, where *n* is 0 or 1. *n* = 0 gives the greatest absolute accuracy; *n* = 1 yields greater compatibility with QDOS's line drawing.

Precision of the mathematical routines may be adjusted by using `_lngPREC n`, where 4, 2, 1, and 0 are the only legal values for *n*. *n* = 4, 2, or 1 yields 4, 2, or 1 byte accuracy, respectively. Four is the default value. The lesser byte values may be used to speed up calculations where the loss of accuracy is not important. Zero causes reversion to the built-in QDOS routines.

If the `_newnames` library is used, the corresponding command is `_lngFPREC n` and the legal values are 4, 2, and 1. Zero has no meaning for this command.

Finally, LGCSE provides a channel utility, CHANNELMASTER, that may be used for run-time examining or modifying of most parameters pertaining to screen or SuperBasic channels that belong to any program currently running. These parameters include, e.g., character font/size/spacing, PAPER/INK/STRIP colors, etc. Caution is advised in the use of CHANNELMASTER; tampering with the inner workings of QDOS can be hazardous to the health of your programs and/or data. As DP puts it, "If you are VERY BRAVE and like to tinker..."

And now, let us get down to the nitty-gritty: How does it (LGCSE) do ?

The majority of the speed-checking was done on my Minerva (V. 1.97) equipped QL. Along the way, in order to checkout some anomalous times, the Gold Card (V. 2.32) was temporarily swapped out to a JSU ROM QL.

The QL clock can time only to the nearest second. Because it was used for timing, I adjusted loop iterations to yield a time of 100 seconds or more in the fastest loop to give a minimum accuracy of about 1%.

A further consideration is loop overhead, i.e., the time cost of the necessary bookkeeping. In a functional evaluation, one could replace, say, $y = \sin(x)$ with the

LIGHTNING S/E - (CONT'D)

expression $x = x$, a harmless fiction retaining time cost of the assignment but eliminating cost of the function evaluation. Note that if the function involves several variables, an assignment statement must be made for each variable. For example, CIRCLE x,y,r could be replaced by $x=x$: $y=y$: $r=r$. Names of the variables are unimportant; $x=x$: $x=x$: $x=x$ would be just as good.

Similarly, in a text processing loop, where strings are being printed, replace all strings by null strings. For instance, PRINT a\$ becomes PRINT "".

By running two loops, identical except for these substitutions, the bookkeeping effect can be canceled out and function timing determined. If these two loops are then run both with and without Lightning active, the effective speedup can be found. This was the procedure used here.

The following tables summarize the results found for text, graphics, and mathematical function handling. The speedup factor is the ratio of net loop times without and with LGCSE activated. Except where explicitly stated otherwise, all results were obtained with a JSL1 (Minerva) ROM fitted.

Table 1 summarizes the text handling effects tested. The programs were extracted from DEMO_TEXT_BAS and modified to incorporate timing and overhead determination.

<u>Operation</u>	<u>Speedup Factor</u>
PRINT a string to each of 3 windows	3.62
PRINT a string: SCROLL -10	4.83
PRINT 2 screen-filling strings	9.31

Table 1. Summary of Text Handling Tests.

Table 2 summarizes the results for the graphics functions tested. DEMO_GRAF_BAS provided the basic program bits and pieces, which were then modified as for the text handlers.

<u>Graphics Functions</u>	<u>Speedup Factor</u>
Plot Points	1.53
Draw Lines	1.22
Draw Open Circles	1.51
Draw Filled Circles	1.14

Table 2. Summary of Graphics Handling Tests.

Tables 3a and 3b summarize results for the math functions tested. The functions were evaluated over a range in the independent variable to avoid biasing. Note also that the functions have been grouped. This means that the results are averaged over the functions of a group. Each function was evaluated 100,000 times per run.

Table 3a shows the anomalous behavior alluded to previously: the Lightning SQRT function appears to be slower than that for the QL at the 4-byte precision level. As a check, I tried the MATH_newnames library for a direct comparison between QL's SQRT and Lightning's FSQRT. Results were as before.

LIGHTNING S/E - (CONT'D)

<u>Functions, JSL1 ROM (Minerva)</u>	<u>Speedup Factor</u>
EXP, LN, LOG10	1.44
ASIN, ACOS, ATAN, ACOT	1.44
SIN, COS, TAN, COT	1.55
SQRT Precision, bytes: 4	0.72 (!)
2	1.33
1	1.52

Table 3a. Summary of Math Function Tests on the JSL1 (Minerva) ROM.

I then swapped computers, plugging the Gold Card into a QL with a JSU ROM. The same set of tests was run (except for the 2 and 1 byte precisions); results are shown in Table 3b.

<u>Functions, JSU ROM</u>	<u>Speedup Factor</u>
EXP, LN, LOG10	1.53
ASIN, ACOS, ATAN, ACOT	1.84
SIN, COS, TAN, COT	1.80
SQRT Precision, bytes: 4	1.35

Table 3b. Summary of Math Function Tests on the JSU ROM

It is immediately apparent from comparing Tables 3a and 3b that Minerva is faster than the JSU (no surprise there), so it is reasonable to get smaller speedups using Minerva. But less than 1 ?? Is it possible that the Minerva designers out-optimized DP ? I have no real answer to that.

What it all boils down to is this, is it worthwhile installing Lightning Gold Card Special Edition (to give it its full mouth-filling name) ? Well, I am installing it on all my BOOTS. I am using it in conjunction with QUILL, with which this document is being produced. Instead of leisurely meandering through the file, a F3 GT or F3 GB zips from one end of the file to the other, almost before my finger is off the last key. In short, yes; buy it, you'll like it.

DJTOOLKIT - A REVIEW

Massapequa, New York, USA - Bob Gilder

I became interested in the DJToolkit after browsing through the Dilwyn Jones Computing ads in the last issue of IQLR. It was as though the author of this software had me in mind - the toolkit was totally compatible with the QLiberator compiler. Turbo and Supercharge can also benefit from the DJToolkit, with the exception of one command, DEV_NAME. This function tends to modify its parameters as well as returning a string.

DJTOOLKIT - (CONT'D)

The DJToolkit is very easy to use , provides 44 useful extensions and is extremely powerful. The Toolkit is less than 4 Kbytes long. There are several versions of the Toolkit: DJToolkit_BIN which is booted into the reserved memory area, DJToolkit_rom is a file that can be burned onto a 27128, 16 K eeprom and DJToolkit_rpm for those users who may wish to add their own header with Liberation Software's Resident Program Manager software (RPM). A lot of thought went into this software package to benefit a wide variety of the software user's requirements.

A 20 page manual accompanies the disk, providing a brief description of the new commands as well as detailed description for each of the new functions and procedures. Quite a few SuperBASIC listings are provided in the detailed section of the manual, that can be used as demonstrations for some of the toolkit extensions.

Updates_doc is an extension of the DJToolkit Manual. This document provides latest updates that were added to the toolkit, but were added too late for insertion into the manual.

The Toolkit areas covered include screen handling, file handling, file and date extensions, environment functions (free memory, pointer environment detection, check if given SuperBASIC extensions are present, check if level 2 device drivers are present), common heap extensions, font handling extensions, file headers, memory block move and search functions and general programming aids such as system variable address function, screen base address function, display width function for dealing with new graphics hardware and so on.

Outlined below is a brief description of the new procedures and functions as outlined in the manual:

ABS_POSITION	Set file position absolute.
BYTES_FREE	How much free memory is left, in bytes.
CHECK	Test to see if machine code PROC/FN exists.
DEV_NAME	Scan the Directory Device list, returning next name.
DISPLAY_WIDTH	How many bytes used to hold one screen line?
DJTK_VER\$	Return the toolkit version number as a string.
FETCH_BYTES	Get some bytes from a channel.
FILE_BACKUP	Get some backup date for a specific file.
FILE_DATASPACE	Get the file's dataspace.
FILE_LENGTH	Get the file's length.
FILE_POSITION	Get the current position in the file.
FILE_TYPE	Get the file's type.
FILE_UPDATE	Get the file's update date.
FLUSH_CHANNEL	Flush the data on a channel to a device.
GET_BYTE	Fetch one byte from a channel.
GET_FLOAT	Fetch 6 bytes from a channel.
GET_LONG	Fetch 4 bytes from a channel.
GET_STRING	Fetch a QDOS string from a channel.
GET_WORD	Fetch 2 bytes from a channel.
KBYTES_FREE	How much free memory is left in Kbytes.
LEVEL2	Test whether level 2 drivers are present on a channel.

DJTOOLKIT - (CONT'D)

MOVE MEM	Move memory around.
MOVE_POSITION	Set a file position relative to its current one.
PEEK_STRING	Get bytes from memory into a string.
POKE_STRING	Store the string in memory at a given address.
PUT_BYTE	Send one byte to a channel.
PUT_FLOAT	Send 6 bytes to a channel.
PUT_LONG	Send 4 bytes to a channel.
PUT_STRING	Send a QDOS string to a channel.
PUT_WORD	Send 2 bytes to a channel.
QPTR	Is the Pointer Environment available?
READ_HEADER	Read the header for a file into a buffer.
RELEASE_HEAP	Remove some space allocated with RESERVE_HEAP.
RESERVE_HEAP	Get some Common Heap space for a program to use.
SCREEN_BASE	Find out where the screen memory starts for a channel.
SCREEN_MODE	Returns the current screen mode, 4 or 8.
SEARCH_C	Look into memory for a string, case is considered.
SEARCH_I	Ditto, but case is ignored.
SET_HEADER	Set the header for a file.
SET_XINC	Change horizontal spacing between characters.
SET_YINC	Change vertical spacing between lines of characters.
SYSTEM_VARIABLES	Find out where the system variables are.
USE_FONT	Change the fonts used by a channel.
WHERE_FONTS	Find the addresses of the two fonts on a channel.

There are two very important files included on on the disk; DEMOS_bas and DEMOS_doc. DEMOS_bas is a 37K SuperBASIC file chocked full of useful procedures and functions using a variety of the DJToolkit extensions. DEMOS_doc supports it's SuperBASIC counterpart as it provides detailed instructions for use of each procedure and function in the order that they are programmed.

For owners of the QLOAD utility, the file DEMOS_sav can be loaded with the QLOAD command.

I would strongly advise the new user to print out the DEMOS_doc file for use with DEMOS_bas or use a multi-tasking front end, activate Quill, load in the DEMOS_doc file, CTRL-C into basic and load in the DEMOS_bas file. List the file and CTRL-C back and forth for instructions and operation.

Incidentally, all of those procedures and functions supplied on DEMOS_bas can be extracted and used within other programs. I extracted one 8-line procedure called 'AUTO_REPEAT' which uses the SYSTEM_VARIABLES function. I have an external Schoen Keyboard interface which suffers from keyboard 'roll-over' or repeat characters. Several different remedies have been tried throughout the years with out a correction for this problem. AUTO_REPEAT did the job! For me - the DJToolkit was well worth the purchase price of £10 for correcting this nagging problem.

There are many more useful routines within DEMOS_bas. Some of my favorites are: SLIDE_SHOW for viewing a number of screen dumps, FILE_DETAILS and DRIVE_DETAILS, MAKE_DIRECTORY for Level2 sub-directories, FIND_FILE lists

DJTOOLKIT - (CONT'D)

the filename of files containing a user input string on the screen and a short extract of the file on either side of the string that was found. I'm sure that the many other routines nested in this program that would suit every QL user.

Four fonts are provided for use with the `USE_FONT` procedure. This procedure allows the user to change the standard QL character set within any channel. Fonts from Digital Precision's Lightning and Dilwyn Jones Computing Page Designer can also be loaded and used.

The DJToolkit is compatible with Toolkit2. Activating `TK2_ext` and typing 'EXTRAS' will reveal the DJToolkit commands nested within the other functions and procedures.

The author of DJToolkit allows any legal owner of this toolkit to include it in QLiberator compiled programs even if you intend to sell commercially or give it away as public domain software or as shareware, by linking it to the program.

The software package is available on disk or microdrive cartridge and will operate on an unexpanded QL.

The author, Norman Dumbar and Dilwyn Jones have made this software package 'idiot-proof', it is that easy to use. The whole software package; the Toolkit and its supporting documentation and demo program and SuperBASIC listings make the use of DJToolkit very easy, even for a novice QL user. Most software manufacturers seem to prepare their supporting documentation for users at their own level, forgetting that, perhaps, there are QL users out there that require simple step-by-step instructions just to get a 'grip' on it. It's obvious that the team of Norman Dumbar and Dilwyn Jones really understand this problem empathizing with the vast majority of software users.

The DJToolkit is powerful, easy to get going and a steal at £10.00. Buy it! You won't regret this purchase.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Tony Firshman and TF Services have recently moved from the big city (London), to the more tranquil countryside of Ascot. Please note the change of address:

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Dear QL-User, this page gives you an overview of our products. Of course, a complete list would not fit. If you require more information, send a postcard or call. **All prices in DM!**

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Many News,
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All prices in DM, incl. 15% VAT. For orders to non-EEC countries, deduct 15%. All programs need 512k RAM minimum. Programs come on 3.5" DO disks.

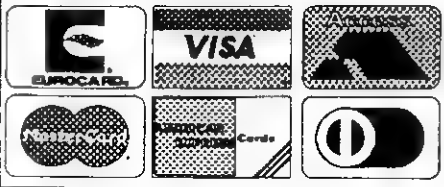
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QL-Emulator now for TT

The "QVME" QL-Emulator, which worked until now "only" in Mega ST's and (with adaptor) in Mega ST's, runs now on the ATARI TT too! Of course, you get here all the same resolution up to 1024x900 pixels, and the machine is extremely fast (68030 running at 32MHz)! More information in the info which you can get from us.

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Either completely closed for all STs or STes (with PSU, cables and adaptor) or internal for Mega STE or TT. All disks are 3.5" from Quantum, very fast and with 256k Cache.

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as long as stocks last!

News

The Oracle - Brandnew Game! (by J.Merz)

Have a look at it - the new game for the Pointer Environment. The Oracle is an ancient tactic-puzzle, where you do not have to be fast but clever! You have to fill the tiles into the field, but there are various rules how to do it. If you can place all the tiles you get bonus - if you obey special rules you can get much more points! The first person who solves the puzzle will be able to buy goods for free from Jochen Merz Software - the amount of the sum depends on the score! Every game is different, you'll never be bored! Other features: high-score table, hints for the next move etc. **DM 49,90**

MineField (by B.Scheffeld)

A new Game for the Pointer Environment. It requires a lot of skill and concentration to mark an area of mines. Many options, configurable area size, number of mines etc. Requires Toolkit II. **DM 39,90**

LineDesign

A real vector drawing package for the QL - of course, it is running under the Pointer Environment! All manipulations are without loss of precision, as everything is vector-based (and calculated in lines or bezier-curves!). Objects may be resized by "dragging" the corners to the new size and may be magnified to any size required. Objects may be combined, filled and even rotated! You can zoom in and out and work in every view rate. Printer drivers for EPSON compatible dot matrix printers, HP Deskjet and HP Laserjet. You get together with the program ten disks of vector fonts and graphics (clipart). You can produce real professional looking output! Lots of special effects. Even Adobe Illustrator files can be imported into LineDesign! **DM 249,-**

HyperHELP for SuperBASIC

HyperHELP is a new helpsystem, which may be used "on its own", just for SuperBASIC, or integrated into QD (see description of Version 5). HyperHELP for SuperBASIC is very easy to use. If you need help, pop up a button (or execute it from file or Thing) and you will see a list of all the keywords, procedures and functions installed in your system. Select one of the items and you will get comprehensive help on the subject, with a listing of all the parameters and even examples - for the complete SuperBASIC! Some 100 kilobytes of English and German help are supplied. You can extend HyperHELP very easily yourself, all you need is a text editor or Quill. You can edit the text, add own remarks and examples etc. The other products from Jochen Merz Software will have help texts in the future, so if you buy a software package you will automatically get the help texts and you can incorporate them into the HyperHELP. **DM 49,-**
If you wish to upgrade to QD5 later, you get a discount of **DM 25,-** when you buy QD5!

SER Mouse

SER Mouse is a software driver which allows you to connect a cheap serial (PC) mouse to one of the serial ports of the QL (the manual tells you how to make up a connector). This mouse mimics exactly the QIM1, but for a much lower price! In addition, if you have a three-button mouse (and most of them have three buttons) then you have some additional functions: the centre button is ESC, left+centre is Wake and right+centre is Sleep. If you get a cheap mouse, the costs are 1/2 the costs of a QIM1 mouse package - and you don't have to open the QL. Now Hermes-compatible!

SER Mouse software driver DM 40,-
SER Mouse complete incl. Mouse DM 87,-
(please specify if for 9 or 6 pin SER plug)

If you are still using Quill, you probably have a huge wish list for improvements. What would you do if you could get all these wishes fulfilled (and more)? The authors of Perfection have obviously listened to the many complaints people have with the original Quill word processor. These complaints have all been addressed. Perfection goes far beyond just improvements. Perfection is an entirely new program with modern features that manages to still be intuitive to Quill users.

When I first received the review copy of Perfection, I started reading the manual. I use a number of Digital Precision programs and from past experience thought some work with the manual would be needed. I'd like to quote a couple sentences from section 1.2 headed Don't Panic!. "As we've said before, we shouldn't be surprised if you don't need a manual at all for *PERFECTION*, at least for everyday operations. Just trusting your intuition (especially if you've used Quill before) and relying on the menus at the top of the screen which repeated pressing of F3 (or SHIFT/F3) will bring up may well be all the instructions you need. "This sounded like a challenge to me so I stopped reading at that point. I managed to do everything I wanted to without the manual (except for using the spelling checker). This included installing Perfection on to my hard disk, reconfiguring to run from the hard disk, converting my Quill DeskJet printer driver, creating a new printer driver and printing. This program really is user friendly. The manual is well worth reading even if you don't need it right away. I found this to be the best Digital Precision manual I've ever used. The manual starts out with the basics. Each step is carefully explained so that a new computer user will be successful. As you proceed through the chapters, features of Perfection are explained in ever increasing detail. This allows you to get as much information as you want without being overwhelmed right away. The manual contains a glossary, an index, table of contents and a section on system messages. If only other manuals were written this way!

The first impression I had of Perfection has been a lasting one. Perfection is fast. I tend to downplay claims about speed. However, Perfection lives up to those claims. I can't see any point in doing timing tests. Enter your command and Perfection does what you want right away. The only commands that took a little time were involved search and replace commands that I used to replace carriage returns with quotes and commas. A friend asked me to help convert an MS-DOS database into a comma delimited file with quotes around each field. Perfection did the job.

Perfection is supplied with a readme file that is a very good tutorial on its own. The file cleverly gets you to interact with it and learn many of Perfection's features as you read it. This file gives you a learning experience with visual feedback. I was impressed that the time was taken to find another way to bring a new user up to speed even faster.

When you receive Perfection, the defaults are set to run from floppy. Almost everything about Perfection can be reconfigured from the size of its windows to job priority to screen colors to how fast a keypress autorepeats. I found that if there was something I wanted to change there was a way to do it. The format of the configuration program should be familiar to users of Digital Precision products. The up/down arrow keys are used to select the item to be changed while space calls up the actual list of choices for that item.

PERFECTION PLUS S/E - (CONT'D)

When you first run Perfection, the initial screen contains a four line menu at the top of the screen. The bottom line of the screen is the command line which contains status messages and queries for input. The menu area is similar to Quill but better. Functions that Quill users will be familiar with:

- F1 calls up the help screen. A huge amount of information is conveyed in a short easy to understand way.
- F2 toggles the menus on or off.
- F3 advances to the next menu.
- F4 redraws the screen

```
F1 HELP          |SHIFT F1 last cmd |ESC Escape/Cancel |++ by char/line
F2 Menu on screen|SHIFT F2 Mode8 ↔ |SHIFT F5 one/two -|+ SHIFT para/word
F3 Menu 1+2+3+1  |SHIFT F3 Menu3+2+1|windows,F5 selects|+ SHIFT/ALT window
F4 Refresh screen|SHIFT F4 Size/Move|ALT F5 Over/Insert|CTRL C toggle job

The Timex/Sinclair SIG held its June meeting in room 237 of Dodge Hall
following the SEMCO main meeting.

The June meeting was spent discussing news from the 'Miracle in Newport' meeting
held in Newport, Rhode Island on the 5th of June. The meeting was attended by 55
avid QL users from the United States and Canada. Vendors were present
representing EEC (William Richardson & Co.), TF Services, Miracle Systems,
Mechanical Affinity, Toronto Timex/Sinclair Users Group, Wood and Wind Computing
and IQLR.

Much discussion centered around the QXL introduction. Miracle Systems officially
sold the first production QXL at the meeting. The hardware is complete but the
software is still in Beta test. The QXL was demonstrated running in a PC clone.
Stuart Honeyball patiently answered many questions about progress on the
product. Miracle also provided free upgrades to their products. I took advantage
of their lifetime free upgrade policy to get the latest improvements to my Gold
Card. Miracles' talk about the QXL was well attended. Apparently work on the
SCSI card and Graphics Card will be delayed until the QXL software is completed.

COL1  LIN1  /8  PAG1                                     #84
```

The Quill user will welcome these familiar functions. There are four menus: the initial screen (menu 0) plus three more menus. The most used commands are on the first menu. The lesser used commands are on the following menus.

Other commands of interest:

Shift/F5 creates two windows. This allows you to be in two places at once in your document. You can refer to one section while continuing to work on another section. F5 shifts you between windows. You can independently scroll or move around in one window without affecting the other one. When you are want to go back to one screen use shift/F5 again.

Alt/F5 toggles between overwrite or insert mode

Menu 1

This menu contains a friendly set of search and replace commands. You can specify forward or backwards search and specify whether case must match or not. The replace commands allow you to choose replace the first match, all matches or query on each match. Menu 1 also contains the autoformat Wait command. Wait allows

PERFECTION PLUS S/E - (CONT'D)

you to specify how long Perfection will wait when you have stopped typing before adjusting the page format. This menu also contains the block move, copy and export commands. You'll also find the Load, Save, Merge and Print commands here. Much of your time will be spent with this menu.

Load Save Merge	Forward search	Replace (All)	autoformat Wait
Print document	Backward search	Query the replace	Technical data
export block/file	Case sensitivity	Emphasise (Off)	Zap document
move/copy block	Delete block	Underline (Hot)	eXit program

Menu 2

This menu contains commands related to how the document will be formatted. Here is where you'll set Margins, Justification and Tabs. You will find the reformat options, page break command and attribute options. Menu 2 also contains the Spellchecker options.

Italic (Off)	reformat para	spell Pages/Block	Margins
superScript (Off)	reformat hereon	Spell as you type	Justification
subScript (Off)	forced page break	Reinstate line	Tabs
Highlight (off)	back to Normal	lead space insert	line Wrap

Menu 3

The remaining menu options are here. Goto options include Top or Bottom of the document as well as goto specific page or line. Set your Header and Footers, load in the printer Data of your choice, change strips, see embedded hidden Codes in files, Retrieve defaults and more.

Top/Bottom	hidden Codes	undo Emphasised -	start page Number
goto Line/Page	special insert	Underlined region	Quote page length
pointer Goto/Mark	Header/Footer	undo + + + strip -	Keep tabs?
lazy screen	load printer Data	Sup/sub/ital chnge	Retrieve defaults

Perfection also supports entry of direct commands. Direct commands use combinations of Shift, Control and Alt keys to access a command immediately without working through the different menus to get to it. Both modes of command entry are available at all times. For example to quit select 'X' for eXit from menu 1 or use the direct command 'control/alt/X' at any point.

DIRECT COMMANDS							
SHIFT	CTRL	ALT	CTRL/SHIFT	SHIFT/ALT	CTRL/ALT	CTRL/SHIFT/ALT	
top	bottom	copy	paste	delete	replace	undo	redo
line	block	static	dynamic	search	replace	undo	redo
top	bottom	copy	paste	delete	replace	undo	redo
line	block	static	dynamic	search	replace	undo	redo
CTRL/				CTRL/ALT/			
A cycle justification				immediate replace All			
B goto Bottom of document				Backward search			
C cycle top/bottom				Copy predefined block			
D Define highlight as block				Delete predefined block			
E Emphasise (bold) on				Emphasise (bold) off			
F Forward search				Footer edit			
G immediate search in direction				Goto line			
H reveal Hidden codes in line				Header edit			
I insert top/bottom				set indent margin here			
J enter top/bottom page length				set left margin here			
K hard=forced page break				export predefined block			
L Load file				set Left margin here			
COL1	LINE	7210	PAGE	LJ			#68

PERFECTION PLUS S/E - (CONT'D)

Many commands result in a visual indicator on the bottom status line. Entering Overwrite mode causes OV to be displayed. Toggling the Case Sensitive command adds the CS to the status line. These visual cues are a big help keeping track of where you are. There are no file commands since Perfection multitasks gracefully. While it is not a pointer program, it works well under the Pointer Environment.

Going by the volume of questions and articles in QL publications, the subject of printer drivers is one of the most troublesome. Digital Precision has produced a separate program to make creating a custom printer driver as painless as possible. If you use the standard Epson compatible printer, the driver is already supplied for you. If you have a driver that works under Quill you can easily convert it to a Perfection printer data file by choosing the first option: Create a Perfection printer data file from a Quill printer driver file. There are options to edit an existing Perfection data file and to create one from scratch.

CREATE_PRINTER_DATA

Initial selections...

OPTIONS

<1> Create a Perfection printer data file from a Quill printer driver file

Enter the name of the device that contains the

QUILL Printer Driver file to be converted

or just press ENTER to abandon

<2> Amend

<3> Create

<4>

<5> Quit

Choose 1, 2, 3 or 5

If necessary, use Control/C to activate the cursor

Creating a printer data file from scratch is not as difficult as it is for Quill. The program is very helpful with the mnemonics for the first 32 ASCII characters on screen (that way you aren't stuck looking up the code for form feed). I converted my Quill printer drivers with no problems. You will notice many more available options in the printer data file than the Quill printer driver gave you. Field sizes in the printer data field are 64 characters so even the longest laser printer command should fit. There

are 64 translate strings as well as 8 strip strings available. The translate codes do as you would expect. The translate strings are where you put the codes to get the £ sign to print out properly. The strips are different. The strips allow you to add your own custom combination of features to your document. For example: shadow or outline print (if your printer supports it). One HP DeskJet 550C owner used strips to change the text color on demand. Translates convert an individual character while strips convert everything typed until turned off. Strips are represented on-screen as different paper and ink combinations.

The Plus part of Perfection is the spelling checker. The spelling checker is a separate program that runs alongside Perfection or can be used on its own. The spellchecker comes with a number of dictionaries. There is more than one so that you can use the one that fits within your free memory. The largest - the Mega Dictionary occupies over 1.2 Mbytes in its compressed format. You will need 1.5 Mbytes of free memory in order to compile the dictionary from the supplied files. The spelling checker was one of the most impressive features of Perfection for me. I found it to be easy (once I read the manual), clean and fast. I had to read the manual because I didn't start the spellchecker running before starting Perfection. The spellchecker will ask which dictionary to use. It will then

PERFECTION PLUS S/E - (CONT'D)

prompt for a second dictionary which can be your own unique words that aren't in the main dictionary. Probably technical terms, product names or surnames are the only words the dictionary won't already know about. The spellchecker is invoked by choosing P from menu 2 or the direct command 'ctrl/alt/N'. After specifying how much of the document to check, you'll see a number of red highlighted words. The checking is quick.

```
F1 HELP          (SHIFT F1 last cmd) ESC Escape/Cancel (↑↑↓) by char/line
F2 Menu on screen (SHIFT F2 Mode8 ↔) (SHIFT F5 one/two -) (SHIFT para/word)
F3 Menu 1+2+3+1 (SHIFT F3 Menu3+2+1) (windows, F5 selects) (SHIFT/ALT window)
F4 Refresh screen (SHIFT F4 Size/Move) (ALT F5 Over/Insert) (CTRL C toggle job)

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Card. Miracles' talk about the EE was well attended. Apparently work on the
SCSI card and Graphics Card will be delayed until the EE software is completed.

=====
COL1  LIN1  /6  PAGE1                                     #64
```

Perfection has many more features that I haven't described. Macros are supported. Macros are shorthand ways to get often used commands accomplished. A macro may be a series of commands used to set up all you initial favorite parameters. Maybe you find yourself going through the same series of commands while creating your document. Macros let you automate the keystrokes down to just control/F3 to execute whatever you have specified. Perfection can also do picture insertion. Perfection allows you to insert a Professional Publisher saved page into your Perfection document. There are many more features that I just haven't had time to explore yet.

There are some features I would have liked to see included. Full support for proportional printing. You can access proportional fonts on your printer through the printer data file. However, Perfection counts characters instead of adding the actual width of the characters when determining when to start a new line. This means your right hand margin will be even more ragged than with a standard font. It also means right hand justification will not work with proportional print (see explanation on page 23 section 2.4.1 of the manual). Digital Precision states a module may be produced to support this feature. Since I rely on proportionally spaced documents, I'd welcome their efforts in that direction. I would like some sort of preview feature to get an idea of what the page will look like before I print it. Not only would it save a lot of trees, but it would give me feedback much faster than waiting for the page to print. I assume you could preview the page by exporting the Perfection file to Professional Publisher. The manual explains that Perfection files can be converted into Pro Publisher format files by using the Pubconvert program. Unfortunately, I don't own Professional Publisher, so I can't comment on how well Pubconvert or Propub_inserter works. Digital Precision offers various discounts to Perfection owners that decide to also purchase Professional Publisher.

Perfection is a modern word processor that a Quill user should be able to use right away. It is incredibly fast. Perfection is a FIRST-RATE word processor that deserves your serious consideration.

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All the prices are given in ITL (Italian Lira). To send a foreign currency cheque use current conversion rates (eg 1.000 ITL=0.44£=1.08 DM=0.63\$ - ask your bank as these values may change) but remember to add 10.000 ITL to cover our bank conversion charges.

ZM/x system plus-2: Spectrum 48K emulators. This package comprises ZM/2, ZM/3, BACKUPPERS, ZM/ACCESSORIES (ZM/DISK UTILITIES + ZM/DIGINET) and ZM/CONFIGURATOR. ZM/2 & ZM/3 are sold together as they are complementary. ZM/2 is an emulator and is the most compatible while ZM/3 is a threaded code compiler so ZX games run faster. Specifications: Fast emulation (ZM/3: 50/80% ZX speed on a Gold Card); Smooth sprites movement; True ZX sound through network port; >99% Compatibility on ZM/2 (over 300 games tested); Interface 1 emulation (on ZM/2). The supervisor offers you: True ZXQL tapefiles managing; Z80 Monitor facilities; Z80 snapshot load/save and a lot more. The price comprises one 3.5" disk, 46 pages manual. ZM/2, ZM/3, ZX & QL programs to transfer your ZX programs into the QL via net or ser port (BACKUPPERS - QL <-> ZX IF-1 serial cable is available for 20000 ITL), conversion utilities for Plus-D, Diskiple or Opus Discovery disks (ZM/DISK UTILITIES) and a utility to read and convert directly ZX tapes from the network port (ZM/DIGINET v3 works on any QL hardware with fast ram: GC/TC/Expanderam). The ZM/x system costs 60000 ITL.

ZM/hT system: Advanced Spectrum 48k emulator. The ZM/hT system comprises the full ZM/x system (as explained before) plus the new Z80 compiler ZM/hT (high technology). ZM/hT converts dynamically Z80 code into fast 68000 machine code! It offers you many options to optimise the code produced (speed, compatibility, screen redrawing smoothness...). With ZM/hT you can play games on a 16 MHz Gold Card at a speed very similar to a real Spectrum (70% to 130%). Amazingly compatibility is now >99%, like ZM/2. ZM/hT now works even on 640 Kb QL or Trump-Card QL with interesting speed results (30/50% with some games). "... really spectacular ... Ergon have made a highly professional product, well worth the price" IQLR Vol 3 n.1 - "ZM/hT is fast ... well worth the extra cost... an incredible feat of computer science" Simon Goodwin QLWorld 4/93. The ZM/hT system (ZM/2,3,hT + utilities) costs 90000 ITL.

NEW ZM/128: Spectrum 48k / 128k emulator. New supervisor (similar to ZM/hT): It supports Interface 1 emulation, joystick emulation, and the new Z80 v2.0 48k/128k snapshot format. Disciple 128k Snapshot converter included. Amazingly speed in 128k mode is similar (though slightly slower) than in 48k mode thanks to a very clever 16k memory bank switching implementation. FOR I=1 TO 200:PRINT I:;NEXT I is performed in 13s on a Gold Card. ZM/128 can be bought in addition with ZM/x or ZM/hT system for an additional 20000 ITL.

NEW Ergon Floppy disk utilities: It comprises many useful tools for Double Density (720 Kb), High Density (1.44 Mb) and Extra Density (3.2 Mb) QL or alien disks. You get 1) a fast and powerful DISK EDITOR with many functions: Search, Edit, Collect, Recover corrupted files (even if the directory and/or sector map is corrupted) - 2) An Intelligent disk copier/verifier which can work even with a single disk drive system (single or multiple copies are allowed) - 3) Much more... Ergon FLP disk utilities costs only 35000 ITL !!!

MasterBasic plus-1: The ultimate tool for the SuperBasic programmer. It allows you to speed-up drastically the construction/debugging of your programs. Search and reference any variable, tokens combination, string, FOR and SELECT loop, procedure, function, on the whole program or only inside selected routines; join lines, view return stack ... You see in a pop-up "Line Menu" all the referenced lines and the number of occurrences in each line. Then you can edit or list the desired lines with a simple keypress. MasterBasic is fully compatible with Minerva integer tokens and MultiBasics. Now configurable with auto-sleep option under PE. MasterBasic costs 45.000 ITL with >30 pages manual. *The package is extremely easy to use and well thought out, and even the more casual SuperBasic programmer should get a lot of use out of it* QLWorld 6/92 - "Elegant and useful" Simon Goodwin QLWorld 4/93

QLibrary Manager: Not a simple library manager but a clever SuperBasic source code extractor/manipulator. Do you need a routine from a SuperBasic program written some time ago? QLM will extract it for you, just tell him what you need. Very powerful and professional. QLM costs 40.000 ITL with >20 pages manual. *Overall the package is useful for SB authors and should enable new Basic programs to be created quickly, using experience and routines already created for earlier programs...* QLWorld 8/91

DEAssembler v5 NEW plus-2: DEA is the cheapest but also the most powerful INTELLIGENT disassembler for the QL. Just load the desired file and DEA will do all the work. It usually disassemble >95% of any program without user intervention, saving you HOURS of manual work! It can extract AUTOMATICALLY Toolkit commands ready to be re-assembled. Multi data-types are recognised with automatic selection, providing auto-recognition of SB extensions, ROM headers, strings, QDOS - SMS - PE - WMAN calls, Config tables and Things extensions. DEA has knowledge of the structure of parameters passed to the most important o/s calls. This improves the degree of automatic decoding, and makes generated source code quality and readability really impressive. Calls to the o/s (QDOS/SMS/PE...) and error/system-basic variables keys are reported (with QDOS or SMS notation). The output is 100% compatible with GST/QMAC, METACOMCO, HISOFT assemblers. DEA costs 55.000 ITL with >35 pages manual. QL World 4/92 said about version 4: *This program is certainly the most versatile machine code programming utility I have seen on any computer to date*.

Open World: (V2.1) Graphic conversion utilities. Load into the QL GIF files (present in enormous quantity in all of the BBS), TIF (scanners), IFF (Amiga) or CUT images of any dimension. Convert them into 4, 8 colours (grey levels) or monochrome QL images (with a powerful dithering algorithm - great for DTP applications). Open World costs 35.000 ITL and is supplied on two disks with some beautiful images, a QL to PC screen converter (file saved as GIF) and a program to read QL disks on MS-DOS v5, SUN, VAX, UNIX...

MusicManager: (V1.2) Simple program to create and play music on the QL. Psion style operation. It costs only 20.000 ITL with 8 pages manual. *If you want to produce something of a semblance of music on the QL, then this is a useful package* QLWorld 6/91

Please add 12.000 ITL for airmail postage (Europe) & packaging (25.000 ITL airmail p&p outside Europe). Acceptable forms of payment are: Eurocheque in ITL; Postal order in ITL (send a copy of the receipt); Foreign currency cheque (ie. not in ITL), please add 10.000 ITL for bank fees. Cheque payable to Davide Santachiara. Direct bank transfer to: Banca Popolare Dell'Emilia SWIFT BPOMIT22 Sede Reggio E. CC 6533/73 D.Santachiara (add bank fees even if sending ITL). Discounts: 5.000 ITL off for any 2 progs, 10.000 ITL off for 3, 15.000 ITL off for 4 and so on. To receive our disk with PD or demo version of our programs send 6 IRCs. This disk is really worth having: It contains over 1.5Mb of data in compressed form! All of our programs (except MusicManager) need 512Kb expansion and are based on our powerful Menu System II, a QPac 2-style menu system. They are compatible with Minerva and the P.E. They are written with clear English messages and the manuals have been improved in the UK. When ordering please state your configuration

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publisher's pack contains the component programs which combine the text editing and printing capabilities of **plus4** with the graphic and fount handling power of **LINEdesign**. In addition **publisher's pack** includes two extra items: **fountext93**, a new high resolution upgrade to **fountext88** which prints at 180 x 180 dots per inch on 24-pin and bubblejet printers and the new **plus4** version 3.9 with many enhancements. Step-by-step instructions in the manual together with sample documents and ready-made page-layout objects such as shadowed boxes provide all you need to start preparing you own professional looking publications.

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